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Libya: Aims and Vulnerabilities

Special National Intelligence Estimate

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SNIE 36.5-81
30 January 1981

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LIBYA: AIMS
AND VULNERABILITIES

Information available as of 25 January 1981 was
used in the preparation of this Estimate.

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THIS ESTIMATE IS ISSUED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.

THE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD CONCURS, EXCEPT AS NOTED IN THE TEXT.

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of the Estimate:

The Central Intelligence Agency, the intelligence organization of the Department of State, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency.

Also Participating:

The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army

The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of the Navy

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force

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CONTENTS

| | <i>Page</i> |
|--|-------------|
| KEY JUDGMENTS | 1 |
| DISCUSSION | 3 |
| I. Qadhafi's Motives and Objectives | 3 |
| II. Libya's Policies and Their Implications | 4 |
| The Middle East and the Maghreb | 4 |
| Mediterranean Issues | 5 |
| Intervention in Chad | 5 |
| Overall African Aims | 6 |
| Libya's Economic Importance and Financial Leverage | 6 |
| The American Community in Libya | 8 |
| The Soviet Connection | 8 |
| III. Qadhafi's Vulnerabilities | 9 |
| Opposition at Home and in Exile | 9 |
| Diplomatic Problems in Africa | 9 |
| Libya's Influence in International Organizations | 10 |
| Danger of Military Overextension in Chad | 10 |
| Potential Military Countermoves Against Libya | 11 |
| IV. Near-Term US Interest | 11 |

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25X1

KEY JUDGMENTS

Libyan leader Qadhafi's quest for world status springs from both his own personality and a unique, often militant view of Arab nationalism and Islam. This perspective and Qadhafi's recent success in Chad ensure that his aggressive policies will pose a growing challenge to US and Western interests in the Middle East and Africa.

The relative economic well-being of the Libyan public, combined with Qadhafi's vigorous program of internal security, work to protect him and provide wide scope for his foreign adventures. Although popular discontent with Qadhafi is growing, domestic and exile opposition to his regime is poorly organized and ineffective. He retains almost complete control of the military. If Qadhafi becomes bogged down in Chad—and especially if France, Egypt, and other African states support an anti-Libyan resistance—disillusionment in the Libyan military could combine with domestic unhappiness to mount a serious—perhaps definitive—challenge to his rule.

Libya's opposition to any Arab accommodation with Israel, Qadhafi's ungenerous and unreliable approach to dispensing aid, and his intrigues against moderate governments have led to Libya's near ostracism in the Arab world. Moreover, involvement in Chad represents his first large-scale military intervention in Sub-Saharan affairs. It is likely to spur more adventurism against already deeply alarmed neighboring states, even though the increasing burden of maintaining forces in Chad will become a growing liability.

Libya's most serious potential weapon against the United States is not its 10-percent share of the US crude and product import market but its critical share of light, low-sulfur crude, on which most US east coast refineries are seriously dependent. A prolonged cutoff of Libyan crude would tighten gasoline supplies and boost prices in the United States and could lead to short-term shortages until constrained refineries offset the shortfall.

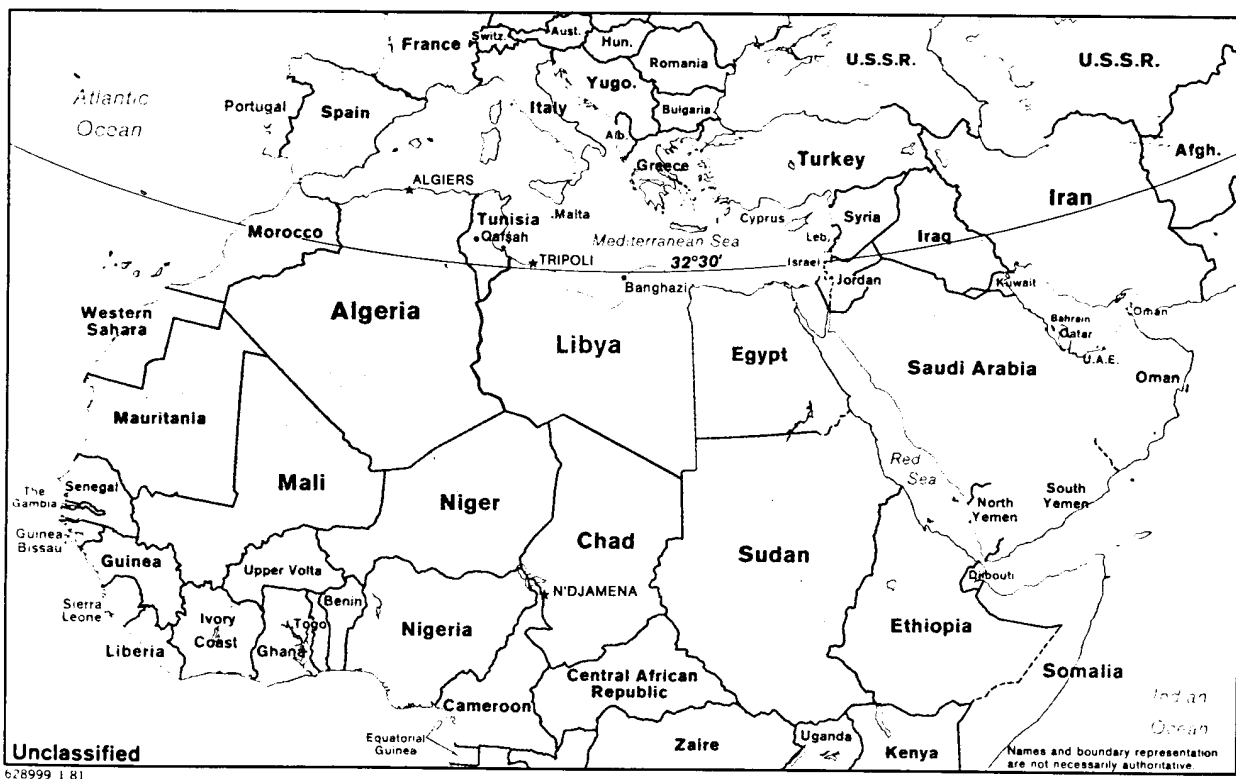
The American community in Libya—more than 2,000 persons—is vulnerable to Libyan retaliation, including arbitrary arrest, if Qadhafi feels threatened by the United States. Tripoli's threats to defend its unilaterally claimed air and territorial waters jurisdiction in the Mediterranean, coupled with its improved military capabilities, could result in a clash with US naval vessels or military aircraft.

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Soviet objectives are served by Qadhafi's anti-Western policies and destabilization of African regimes. Additionally, the Soviets gain substantial hard currency earnings from massive arms sales to Libya.

Qadhafi's relations with Moscow—particularly regarding arms purchases—have become progressively broadened in recent years, and could result ultimately in his signing a treaty of friendship and cooperation and/or granting port access to the USSR.



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DISCUSSION

1. Muammar al-Qadhafi has been seeking the world's attention since he overthrew King Idris on 1 September 1969. He has mobilized Libya's impressive oil resources to extend his leadership beyond the Libyan population of 2.8 million. In his quest, he has employed political intrigue, diplomatic activism, terrorism, assassination, and now, in Chad, military occupation.

2. US-Libyan relations have been badly strained since the sacking of the US Embassy in Tripoli in December 1979. That incident—which caused the most serious disruption of diplomatic ties since Libyan independence in 1951—capped years of increasing tensions in bilateral relations instigated almost exclusively by Qadhafi's efforts to thwart US-sponsored peace negotiations and to undermine Western and particularly US influence in the Middle East. The attack on the Embassy signaled an even more aggressive bent in Libyan behavior, probably spurred by Qadhafi's desire to compete for revolutionary pre-eminence with Iran, and to challenge what he considered aggressive new US moves into the Middle East and the Horn of Africa.

3. This Estimate reviews Qadhafi's foreign and domestic policies and their implications for the United States and the West. It examines his political strengths and his vulnerabilities, which are pointed up by his adventure in Chad.

1. QADHAFI'S MOTIVES AND OBJECTIVES

4. Qadhafi's political behavior and world view derive in large part from unique reactions to his Bedouin background. Because of special circumstances in his childhood, Qadhafi absorbed, in exaggerated form, the Bedouin characteristics of naive idealism, religious fanaticism, intense pride, austerity, xenophobia, and sensitivity to slight. As a result of the discriminatory treatment he encountered as a Bedouin during his early schooling in Libya's cities—at the hands of urbanized Libyans as well as foreigners—Qadhafi developed an intense disdain for established elites, a rigid

adherence to his Bedouin ways, and a strong identification with the downtrodden. He is a religious zealot who continues to be more responsive to his own rigid internalized values than to external political reality. Despite 11 years as a chief of state, Qadhafi habitually behaves as though he never left his home in the desert. These characteristics have found political expression both in his own rebellion against authority and in his indiscriminate support of rebel causes throughout the world.

5. To defend himself psychologically, Qadhafi has developed an exalted, even grandiose sense of self-importance. He sees himself as Nasser's successor and has become progressively messianic in pursuit of this mission. He thus combines the late Egyptian leader's Pan-Arabism with his own austere brand of Muslim morality—which is regarded as heretical by many Muslims—to form the basis of a revolutionary ideology which he has set down in his "Green Book," a blueprint for reshaping human society.

6. Qadhafi's vision for Libya seeks to restore the purity and simplicity that he supposes existed in earlier Arab history and then to export the revolution to the world. Repudiating both Communism and Western ideas of democracy, Qadhafi argues that true democracy can only mean direct rule by all the people. He has abolished political parties, stepped down from formal office, and stubbornly maintains the fiction that Libyan national decisions are made by the General People's Congress, formed from people's committees which he established to force the Libyan population to assume an appropriate revolutionary stance.

7. The utopian society Qadhafi claims to be establishing in Libya will inevitably, he believes, serve as a model for a unified, Pan-Arab state which will become the nucleus of a larger grouping encompassing the entire Islamic world. In time, this massive Islamic society will allegedly attract the allegiance of the non-Islamic Third World. These ideas, some of which reflect Nasser's early revolutionary concepts, inspire Qadhafi's

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persistent effort to unite with another Arab or Islamic state—Egypt, Sudan, Syria, and Tunisia in past years, Syria again last September, and most recently Chad.

8. Qadhafi's amateurish efforts to assume a leading role in the Middle East have met with a series of frustrating failures. He has, therefore, turned his attention to an area that might otherwise have been—according to his own ideology—a secondary target: Saharan Africa. Here, countries with predominant or sizable Islamic populations, all susceptible to the lure of Libyan money, invite Libyan interference.

9. Qadhafi's recent success in Chad can be expected to fuel his messianic vision and drive him on to seek even greater successes, not only in Africa, but in other areas as well. It could accelerate his longstanding determination to acquire a nuclear weapon in order to enhance his view of himself as a world leader of stature.

10. When Qadhafi's exalted self-image is threatened by failure, he is apt to behave in apparently impulsive or quixotic fashion. Especially when he feels frustrated in his drive for recognition and Arab leadership, he is apt to seek significance through confrontation. This tendency was very much in evidence in September when he called for a merger with Syria and exhorted his people to be prepared to die through confrontation rather than submit to alleged US plans to dominate the Arabs. Should the present heady success in Chad turn sour, this dangerous mindset could well recur. But, though Qadhafi can behave impulsively, he is not for the most part captive of his impulses; he is pragmatic on occasion, has the instincts of a survivor, and has shown the capacity to retreat, plan, and wait.

II. LIBYA'S POLICIES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

The Middle East and the Maghreb

11. Qadhafi is implacably opposed to Arab accommodation with or the acceptance of a Jewish Israel's legitimacy. To him establishment of the Zionist state was an act of contempt by the West against the Arabs and Islam. His conception of Arab honor, flowing as it does from his primitive cultural base, requires that the Western insult can be removed only with Israel's disappearance as a state or by a vast alteration of its religious character.

12. Thus, Libya has actively opposed any and all Arab actions and suggestions, including especially those from moderate factions of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), of willingness to accept Israel as a reality. And Qadhafi has made it clear that he considers Egypt's peace treaty with Israel a fundamental error and near treason.

13. Despite recent reports that Qadhafi and Egyptian President Sadat may be cooperating to ease tension on their common border, there is nothing in the record to suggest that Qadhafi has stopped working toward Sadat's overthrow. Sadat, who considers Qadhafi dangerous and irrational, does not intend to permit Libya to subvert the Arab-Israeli peace process, threaten Sudan, or consolidate its position to Chad.

14. In general, Qadhafi's aggressive policies in the eastern Arab world have led to Libya's isolation. But he continues to support terrorism aimed at subverting the peace process and general clandestine activity against moderate Arab targets. Qadhafi seriously damaged his tenuous links to Saudi Arabia when he called for an Islamic holy war to liberate Mecca from US occupation—a wild charge stemming from the October dispatch of four US early warning (AWACS) aircraft to Saudi Arabia following the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war. Riyadh severed diplomatic relations with Tripoli as a result.

15. Among the members of the Arabs' Steadfastness Front (Syria, the PLO, South Yemen, and Algeria), Libya is currently close only to Syria, which has agreed on paper to a merger. But even here there are serious differences preventing real movement toward unity. Qadhafi not only has failed to provide Syria with the "unity" funds President Assad so desperately wants, but has also held back on payments to Damascus agreed to at the summit meeting in Baghdad.

16. Iraq, despite its shared militancy toward Israel, has had a stormy relationship with Libya primarily because of Qadhafi's antipathy toward the secular ideology of the Iraqi Ba'th Party. Relations between the two countries have reached a new low as a result of Qadhafi's support of Iran in its war against Iraq.

17. Libyan relations with Iran have improved significantly as a result of Iranian need for Qadhafi's support. Emerging areas of cooperation between the two countries are likely to include coordination of some foreign policies, including petroleum policy, and

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expanded trade, communications, and transportation ties. The Libyans are already facilitating Iranian efforts to purchase arms and refined petroleum on world markets. But there are limits to the relationship due to Iranian fear of the Libyan-Soviet relationship and conviction that Qadhafi was responsible for the disappearance of a Shiite notable.

18. Qadhafi's policy toward the Maghreb states has alternated between coaxing and bullying. Tunisia in particular fears Libyan intentions. In the aftermath of a Libyan-sponsored raid on the Tunisian town of Qafsa in 1980, Tunisia has protested the Chadian invasion and Libyan military maneuvers near the Tunisian border. Qadhafi's goals clearly include ultimate incorporation of Tunisia, but for the present his efforts are restricted to subversion. Recent clandestine reporting suggests accelerated training and recruiting of Tunisian dissidents.

19. Libya has traditionally had relatively good relations with Algeria. Although Qadhafi tried to manipulate the succession process following the death of Algerian President Boumediene and has competed with Algiers for influence over the Polisario organization seeking control of Western Sahara, Algeria's stature in the Third World and superior military power have largely kept Qadhafi in check on issues important to Algiers. Algeria, in fact, is one of the few regional powers with the potential strength and position to influence Libya. With Egypt acting as a controlling force to the east, Algeria could, if it were so inclined, exert a significant neutralizing influence over Qadhafi's troublemaking.

20. Libyan adventurism, including growing support for the Polisario, appears to have recently accelerated Moroccan and Algerian efforts to settle the Western Saharan conflict. Tripoli's present objectives are served by continuation of the conflict, and, despite Polisario hesitation, Libyan aid and influence are growing. Lack of a common border hampers Qadhafi's plans for the Western Sahara, however, and has contributed to Libyan efforts to increase influence in Mauritania. Libyan involvement in an apparent abortive coup attempt in Mauritania in early January caused a brief crisis between the two countries but apparently has not seriously damaged their overall relationship.

Mediterranean Issues

21. Libyan relations with Tunisia and Malta have been complicated by Tripoli's exaggerated territorial claims to the continental shelf—in both cases involving known undersea oil deposits. Though Libya's disputes with its two neighbors over offshore drilling rights have involved the International Court of Justice, there is considerable doubt that Libya would accept an adverse ICJ ruling.

22. These broad claims to the continental shelf are paralleled by Libya's unilateral position regarding its territorial waters. These, Tripoli asserts, extend to latitude 32° 30' North, thereby encompassing the entire Gulf of Sidra. No other government recognizes the Libyan claim. Concomitant with improved Libyan military capabilities, Libyan reactions to US reconnaissance flights and naval maneuvers have escalated dramatically, as a manifestation both of Qadhafi's increasingly assertive and aggressive behavior and of his longstanding fear of US intentions. Accordingly, the potential for hostile Libyan action against American forces in the area has significantly increased over the past year, especially within and above Libya's claimed territorial waters. While there is some question whether Qadhafi would actually risk US retaliation, his military reportedly has standing orders to attack US ships or aircraft penetrating this line. Consequently, whether by intent or accident, chances for an incident off Libya involving the United States are relatively high.

Intervention in Chad

23. Libya's military intervention in Chad in late 1980 reversed the waning military fortunes of the N'Djamena government in its civil war against Chadian rebel leader Hissein Habre. It also left Chad defenseless against Qadhafi's desire to announce the merger of the two countries. These events struck sensitive chords among African nations, rousing memories of the Arab slave trade and violating Africa's sacrosanct principles of noninterference in internal affairs and the inviolability of colonial borders. Furthermore, it conferred on Libya a reputation for aggressiveness and military success. With the exception of the small Libyan military force which tried, and failed, to save

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Idi Amin's regime in Uganda in 1979, the Chadian incursion marked Libya's first large-scale military intervention in Sub-Saharan affairs.

24. Libya's overt involvement in Chad is only the latest turn in a civil war that has festered since October 1965. The current armed factions reflect Chad's ethnic complexity as well as the personal ambition of leaders who have combined and recombined in kaleidoscopic fashion. Almost all of the contenders have at various times received Libyan support.

25. In 1979 a Provisional Government of National Unity (GUNT) was established under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity. Its claim to unity ended with the departure of Defense Minister Hissein Habre, a Muslim northerner whose private army was the best disciplined and most effective of the several armed forces in the field. Habre's forces apparently remain largely intact despite having been forced out of Chad's major towns by the weight of Libyan arms.

26. Left behind as Chad's "legitimate" government were half a dozen remaining factions, including several far less capable northern armies (one of which is headed by President Goukouni) as well as the non-Muslim southerners of Vice President Kamougue. The present political situation is advantageous to the Libyans in several respects. Because Goukouni is dependent on the Libyans, they can put effective pressure on him. At the same time, African opposition to Libya's role in Chad is to some degree moderated by the fact that Goukouni is recognized by the African states as the legitimate head of the Chadian Government. Several other Chadian factional leaders appear to be little more than Libyan tools.

27. But the Libyan intervention is likely to provoke new resistance which could lead to yet another realignment of Chadian forces. Kamougue is expected to be an important factor in any new combination. One possibility would be an alliance between Kamougue and Habre against the N'Djamena government and the Libyans. Although the two leaders have strong antipathy for one another, there have been indications that they, with French encouragement, are working together.

Overall African Aims

28. In addition to offering (but rarely fully implementing) aid programs of various sorts, Libya has

engaged in covert activities throughout black Africa, sometimes wooing governments by bribing leaders or influential officials; more often, subverting them by arming, training, or financing hostile internal groups and individuals. Qadhafi has also enticed and even forced black Africans to join what he calls his "Islamic Legion," whose composition and size are not yet clear, but elements of which are participating in the Chadian operation.

29. Qadhafi is widely believed to be dreaming of building a united Saharan state, under Libyan direction, in the Sahel area from Chad westward to Senegal and Mauritania, based on the area's most Arabized populations. There and elsewhere, Libya seeks to counter Western and pro-Western influences, promote radical revolution sympathetic to Libya's own principles, and extend and protect Islam. Tripoli's actions, however, have been sporadic, often clumsy, and sometimes inconsistent.

30. Though African nations have become gradually more suspicious of Libyan activities, Qadhafi's ability to influence Africans—through fear and through his willingness to spend comparatively large sums on bribes—remains considerable. So far, however, neither Qadhafi's political ideas nor his peculiar interpretation of Islam have evoked significant enthusiasm among black Africans.

Libya's Economic Importance and Financial Leverage

31. Qadhafi could use the "oil weapon" against the United States by threatening interruption of Libyan oil—10 percent of current US crude and product imports (see table)—and by nationalizing US oil company interests in Libya. US oil companies operating in Libya have equity ownership of 30 percent of Libyan oil production, approximately 525,000 barrels per day. The costs of exploration and development of an equivalent amount of oil elsewhere would be at least \$7 billion. For an embargo of oil exports to have much impact on the United States, however, Libya would have to cut oil production. Of particular concern in this regard is Libya's role as a major supplier of hard-to-replace, light-density, low-sulfur oil.

32. Light petroleum is used extensively in producing US gasoline supplies. Most east coast refineries are designed to make extensive use of this type of crude. Conversion of east coast refineries to process heavier

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Imports of Libyan Crude and Refined Products, 1979

| Importing Countries | Libyan Crude Imported (barrels per day) | Share of Total Libyan Crude Exports (percent) | Libyan Share of Total Oil Imports (percent) | Libyan Share of Total Oil Consumption (percent) |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|
| United States | 802,000 | 40 | 10 | 4 |
| Western Europe | 1,055,000 | 53 | 7 | 7 |
| West Germany | 358,000 | 18 | 12 | 13 |
| Italy | 306,000 | 15 | 13 ^a | 19 |
| Spain | 110,000 | 6 | 12 | 15 |
| France | 83,000 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| Netherlands | 24,000 | 1 | 1 ^a | 5 |
| United Kingdom | 12,000 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Others | 162,000 | 8 | 3 | 4 |
| Japan | 7,000 | 1 ^b | 1 ^b | 1 ^b |
| Others | 119,000 | 6 | — | — |

^a Italy and the Netherlands refine Libyan crude for reexport.^b Share is negligible.

Unclassified

crudes with a higher sulfur content could take as long as two to three years and cost as much as \$250-500 million per refinery. At present no east coast refinery has begun this conversion process.

33. Current maximum additional world production capacity for crudes of comparable quality is limited. Algeria and Nigeria have a combined capacity to increase production by 225,000 barrels a day. Other producers, while possessing some spare capacity, do not have crudes with both low sulfur content and high gravity. A Libyan production cut from 1.7 million b/d to 1 million b/d, combined with a ban on exports to the United States, would result, at least for the short term, in a serious gasoline shortage on the US east coast.

34. The United States has limited economic leverage with which to counter Qadhafi's oil weapon. Libya depends on the United States for less than 10 percent of its total imports, and alternative suppliers for most of these goods are readily available. Washington, moreover, has already blocked sales of US-manufac-

tured items such as C-130 and Boeing 747 aircraft that Qadhafi is anxious to obtain.

35. Libya, on the other hand, is almost totally dependent on oil revenues to finance its imports of agricultural products, manufactured goods, arms, and foreign technical expertise. Oil sales account for virtually all of its foreign exchange earnings and 55 percent of its budget revenues. Some 40 percent of Libya's oil production is sold to the United States, earning Libya about \$10 billion a year at current prices.

36. Libya, nonetheless, could survive for an extended period with greatly reduced oil exports to the United States. The financial cushion provided by its \$16 billion in foreign assets is equal to almost one and a half year's earnings from oil exports to the United States. Under current market conditions, a decrease in Libyan revenues resulting from a cut in light crude production could be compensated for to some extent by a probable rapid increase in crude oil prices from the current \$41 a barrel for Libyan crude to as much as \$45 or \$55 a barrel.

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37. Americans working in Libya are the support structure for current US trade with that country. Indeed, fully 60 percent of US exports to Libya during 1980—valued at approximately \$500 million—was heavy equipment for oilfield use. Another 15 percent was equipment for use in agricultural development. This latter area has the greatest potential for expansion, as the Libyans now look almost exclusively to the United States for the technology and expertise to implement their ambitious agricultural development program.

The American Community in Libya

38. There are currently more than 2,000 American citizens—both workers and their dependents—in Libya, and this number may be increasing. Most of them work for oil companies, and the remainder are involved in construction projects or agricultural development. While there are concentrations of Americans in Tripoli and Marsa al Buraygah, on the coast near Banghazi, many are scattered throughout Libya at remote oil sites in the desert. These Americans are quite vulnerable to Libyan retaliation; and Tripoli has already shown a willingness to use expatriate residents as political pawns.

39. Specifically, when the United States expelled six Libyan diplomats in May 1980, 25 Americans were hastily rounded up and given 24 hours' notice to leave the country. When Britain, West Germany, and Italy arrested Libyans during 1980 for their role in the Libyan assassination campaign in Europe, Tripoli arrested nationals of those countries in retaliation. Six British nationals are still being held on trumped-up charges stemming from this incident.

The Soviet Connection

40. Libya's increased importance to the USSR in recent years has both a political and an economic component. The two nations share various foreign policy objectives, including opposition to the Camp David accords, a desire to isolate Sadat, hopes of undermining Western influence, and fostering the emergence of radical elements in the region. Pursuit of these objectives is often complementary. The Soviets have been willing to provide Libya the arms to indulge in military adventures, and have exerted little leverage over Qadhafi's aggressive and subversive actions.

41. The Soviets have become increasingly linked to Libya through large-scale arms deals. Libya is one of the USSR's best customers, accounting for over \$1 billion in arms deliveries annually during the period 1978-80 (approximately one-fifth of the USSR's total transfers to the Third World). In light of the new arms pact signed late last year, Libya has become Moscow's leading arms client eclipsing Iraq and Syria. The new deal likely includes more modern weapons which will boost both the sophistication of Qadhafi's arsenal and his image. The lure of swift repayment in hard currency no doubt has prompted Moscow's eagerness to sell at top dollar to the Libyans; the Libyans, having learned from the Egyptian precedent, are buying in quantity, in part to ease dependence on the Soviets for spare parts and in part to create an impressive arsenal. In addition, there are 1,400 to 1,800 Soviet military advisers in Libya active in all branches of the armed forces.

42. In spite of their increasingly close tactical ties, the USSR and Libya continue to have incompatible ideologies and neither truly trusts the other. The Soviets consider some of Qadhafi's actions adventurous and potentially counterproductive; the Libyans are anxious to avoid any sign of subservience to an outside power. Consequently, any effort by one to apply direct pressure on the other probably would provoke a distinctly negative reaction. The Soviets know that they cannot control Qadhafi and, accordingly, do not view Libya as a potential area for military prepositioning as long as he is in power.

43. Nonetheless, each country has proved sympathetic to the interests of the other. Libya has acted within the Islamic world as a defender of Soviet actions in Afghanistan and has promoted closer ties by Steadfastness Front nations to the USSR. The Soviets, for their part, have refrained from publicly criticizing Libyan actions (such as the attack on Qafsa, Tunisia, in early 1980) which they may consider imprudent. Thus the two have formed a relationship based on common short-term interests rather than on a shared world view.

44. In cooperating with the Libyans in nuclear research, the Soviets have recently shown reduced sensitivity to the problem of Qadhafi's nuclear weapons aspirations. In the past, the Soviet Union pressed Libya to ratify the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty

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and a related nuclear safeguards agreement, and indicated to the United States that nuclear fuel provided to the Libyans would be returned to the USSR and would not contain uranium suitable for use in a nuclear weapon. Recently, however, the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna received a Soviet notification that highly enriched uranium fuel had been supplied to Libya—before the completion of formal procedures for allowing international safeguards inspections—for a research reactor that probably is still under construction. Moreover, the Soviets have informed US officials that the fuel is to remain in Libya indefinitely. These developments will not lead to a Libyan nuclear weapons capability in the near term, unless Qadhafi can acquire additional weapons-usable material from another source, but the risk is increased nevertheless. Libya under Qadhafi cannot be trusted to comply with international safeguards.

45. If Qadhafi's aggressive policies result in growing Libyan isolation in the Arab world and Africa, Libyan dependence on Soviet diplomatic support will grow. While Libya has thus far refused to grant the Soviet Union much-desired port facilities and airfields, Tripoli may in time feel compelled to acquiesce.

III. QADHAFI'S VULNERABILITIES

Opposition at Home and in Exile

46. Qadhafi faces a potentially serious erosion of domestic support as a result of his efforts to reshape Libyan institutions. Last winter, he launched a series of purges and corruption trials designed to intimidate opponents and galvanize the politically apathetic mass of the Libyan people to "revolutionary" action. The purges were unpopular, as was Qadhafi's policy of assassinating exiled political opponents in Europe and the United States. He has long since alienated the middle class with his economic reforms, but his recent confiscation of all family savings above 1,000 dinars (\$3,700) has angered many levels of society.

47. Acceleration of military conscription, coupled with casualties in Uganda and Chad, has also begun to antagonize the traditionally poorer classes that had benefited from Qadhafi's regime. His recent decree that all high schools and universities function as military barracks for half the year and that all students—including females—are to be drafted has aroused considerable opposition.

48. Increasing discontent within the ranks of the military—the one institution capable of removing him from power—is most troubling for Qadhafi. We lack detailed reporting on disaffection within the military, but we have evidence of one near coup attempt last May and of another, more serious one in August. There is no doubt that Qadhafi's introduction of revolutionary committees in the military, which has set juniors over the heads of their seniors, has eroded military morale and discipline.

49. The regime has nevertheless demonstrated an ability to cope with plotting within the armed forces. Qadhafi relies extensively on a system of informers—often fellow tribesmen—in key positions. This network seems to have been instrumental in giving the regime advance warning in the past and will presumably continue to operate. In the civilian sector, the few signs of widespread unhappiness that have emerged in the form of riots or demonstrations have been small enough to be dealt with by the regime with little difficulty.

50. Libyan exiles, who have been the target of repeated assassination attempts by the Libyan Government in the past year, have shown an increasing disposition to organize against Qadhafi, and have received support from a number of other countries, notably Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq. The exile leaders are making some attempts to work together, but with little success. A few have support within Libya itself, but most lack the assets inside the country that could make them a serious danger to Qadhafi.

Diplomatic Problems in Africa

51. African reaction to Libya's Chadian adventure has been divided and cautious, but fears of Libyan expansionism are clearly growing as the fact of Libyan presence in central Africa sinks in. All but a few radical regimes would like to see Libya withdraw, but many African states fear that an aggressive posture on the issue would split and damage the OAU and the image of African unity, or encourage further intervention by France or other Western powers. Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, and France are providing increased covert support to Habre's rebellion against the GUNT and its Libyan supporters in hopes of tying down Qadhafi's army. Others, including some of Chad's weaker Francophone neighbors (such as Cameroon,

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Niger, and the Central African Republic) have welcomed an increased French military presence.

52. Most African countries, however, have supported continued efforts under OAU auspices to give Goukouni's GUNT enough support, through an African peace force, that he will no longer need the Libyans. Beyond refusing to accept a formal Chad-Libya merger, however, the Africans are so far unable to agree on meaningful action.

53. Many African countries look to Nigeria for leadership. For some time, Nigeria appeared to regard France, rather than Libya, as the main obstacle to an acceptable Chadian settlement, and seemed almost complacent about Tripoli's role in Chad. More recently—and particularly since the announcement of the Libya-Chad merger—Nigeria's ire and concern over Libyan activities have been increasing. Lagos does not yet seem prepared to take any initiatives that put it conspicuously ahead of other African countries or risk provoking controversy within the OAU. Despite its newfound apprehension about Libya, moreover, Nigeria continues to regard France as equally dangerous to African independence and unity.

54. The 50-member Organization of African Unity could exert considerable diplomatic leverage on Tripoli, especially in international forums where the size of the African bloc counts, and the firmer stand taken in the 15 January Lome communique is a step in this direction.

Libya's Influence in International Organizations

55. Libyan influence in the OAU and other international organizations—the United Nations, the non-aligned movement, the Islamic Conference Organization—is not significant beyond Arab-Israeli issues. This is a result of Qadhafi's contempt for "traditional" approaches to international politics and his preference for attempts to extend his influence directly through "people's" organizations which he controls or by covert means. This disdain extends even to Arab summit meetings.

56. Outside the Middle East context, Libya for the most part keeps a low profile and rarely takes the initiative on an issue. An exception in recent months has been its leadership at the UN in the effort to take the veto away from the permanent members of the Se-

curity Council. Until recently, the extent of Libyan influence at the UN rested primarily with its very able Ambassador. His departure, with the establishment of the People's Bureau, has drastically reduced Libyan influence outside the Arab Group.

57. But if Libya's overall influence in international organizations is considerably less than its financial clout, there is little doubt about Qadhafi's charisma as a militant leader and a forceful speaker. He has demonstrated repeatedly his ability to generate a spontaneous response among certain Third World representatives to his revolutionary and religious themes. While in general displaying a high degree of insensitivity to criticism, he has from time to time changed tactics—though not overall strategy—in response to world reaction.

Danger of Military Overextension in Chad

58. Libya's military intervention in Chad, while the most dramatic and intense attempt so far by Qadhafi to promote his expansionist ambitions, also contains the potential to exacerbate serious domestic problems and contribute substantially to his downfall.

59. Tripoli has committed in Chad some 6,500 troops, some of them African mercenaries, supported by tanks, artillery, and aircraft. We believe Qadhafi is able and willing to deploy more troops—perhaps to a total of 12,000 to 15,000 regular troops—to defeat Chadian dissidents and ensure a government in N'Djamena faithful to Libyan direction. Following some initial setbacks and relatively heavy fighting, Libyan forces have enabled their clients to gain control of the capital and other key towns. Hissein Habre's outgunned forces withdrew with minimal losses, however, and have the capability to tie down substantial numbers of Qadhafi's troops if Habre pursues his stated intention of moving from more open conventional fighting to guerrilla tactics.

60. Moreover, certain Chadian coalition leaders, although willing to use Libyan support, have no illusions about Qadhafi's motives, which were made starkly clear by the Libyan announcement of intended merger between the two states. As a result, at least one factional leader—Kamougue—is already searching for alternative sources of support, including France, to counter Qadhafi's efforts to incorporate Chad into Libya.

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61. Current indications are that Qadhafi plans a substantial long-term military presence in Chad. If this remains the case, he faces significant risks. The Libyan army is not organized or trained for protracted counterinsurgency operations. It is indifferently led and poorly motivated. Staff organization and functioning are weak at virtually all levels with long vulnerable lines of communications. Libyan forces are widely dispersed and coordinating operations and logistics will be difficult.

62. While Libya has an impressive stock of sophisticated hardware, it is unlikely that command and control systems are capable of managing combined-arms operations over such a wide area as eastern Chad. Faced with inevitable tactical setbacks, Qadhafi himself will be drawn by personality and temperament to exercise increasingly centralized decisionmaking. It is unlikely that Libya will be able to mount a cohesive anti-Habre campaign without substantial professional foreign advice and assistance. Tripoli has indeed won a battle in N'Djamena, but the war in Chad is far from over.

Potential Military Countermoves Against Libya

63. Qadhafi's Chad adventure has raised apprehensions among regional states and other nations, particularly France, that have close ties to West and Central Africa. Although the intervention in Chad has heightened regional security concerns, most states are looking to strengthen their defenses rather than thinking of countermoves against Qadhafi. Little concrete action can be expected of Libya's weaker neighbors, aside from some support to the ineffective Libyan expatriate opposition and an increased level of diplomatic coolness. Egypt and France, however, have shown their willingness to bring pressure to bear on Libya—through such actions as increased assistance to Chadian dissidents—that would make its presence in Chad increasingly costly if not untenable. There are strong indications that France, Egypt, Sudan, and Morocco are already active in this regard.

64. Unwilling to accept unchecked Libyan influence in Chad, France is providing clandestine military support to Habre and Kamougue, while maintaining contact with as many of the other factions as possible. Recent military deployments by the French to Central and West Africa enhance their ability to apply force

on the side of those coalition leaders who would attempt to bolt from Libyan control; we expect the French to encourage such moves.

65. Egyptian moves along the common border, short of hostilities, would force Qadhafi to shift needed military resources away from Chad. Increased military aid to anti-Libyan forces in Chad, including weapon specialists and other technicians, would substantially assist the guerrilla effort.

66. If the Libyans become bogged down in Chad, the steady emotional and resource drain of the war will stimulate renewed dissidence in both Libya's armed forces and its population at large as casualties mount and combat tours are prolonged. Egyptian and French assistance to the guerrillas will intensify this dissension.

67. Qadhafi's security forces would likely respond to domestic unrest with increasingly repressive measures, further alienating the Libyan populace. The erosion in Qadhafi's position at home and isolation abroad could encourage foreign support to opposition leaders and create an improved climate for anti-Qadhafi action in Libya, particularly from within the armed forces and among his chief lieutenants.

68. While we must assume from his own actions that Qadhafi believes himself vulnerable to overthrow, it is impossible to predict his staying power. Qadhafi is clever and has 11 years' survival experience. The Libyan people, moreover, remain extraordinarily apathetic politically. Barring an assassination, he could continue in power for many years to come.

IV. NEAR-TERM US INTEREST

69. Qadhafi's provocative posture will remain a threat to important US interests and principles: the unhampered US access to international waters and airspace near Libya; the fight against international terrorism; the stability of friendly Middle Eastern and African regimes; the Arab-Israeli peace process; and the availability of light, low-sulfur crude oil. If he acquires a nuclear weapons capability over the longer term, Qadhafi, of course, will pose an even greater threat to vital US interests.

70. Arab perceptions of Qadhafi pose a dilemma for US policymakers. However distressing his behavior, certain aspects of Qadhafi's Bedouin moralizing

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strike a responsive chord in wide segments of the Islamic world. From the Arab viewpoint, direct challenges to one another are acceptable, but challenges from outsiders to one of their own are not. Indeed, an open Western challenge could redound to Qadhafi's advantage, transforming him from outcast to Muslim martyr. Arab regimes that did not then oppose any anti-Libyan actions by the United States, especially military action, could be threatened by their own people—a possibility they greatly feared when the United States threatened military intervention in Iran.

71. The diffidence Libya's Arab and African neighbors have shown in dealing with Qadhafi reflects in part their knowledge that their actions could turn against them at home and in the Arab world. A measure of their subtlety is the discretion with which some of Qadhafi's regional foes, including President Sadat, are focusing their resources on quietly bleeding Qadhafi at his most vulnerable point—his over-extension in Chad and the danger this poses for him at home.

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Libyan Imports From OECD Countries F.O.B.--1982
(Million US \$)

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Total Imports From OECD (19) ^a | <u>6,013</u> |
| <u>Foodstuffs</u> | <u>530</u> |
| Italy | 174 |
| Netherlands | 65 |
| Ireland | 50 |
| United States | 30 |
| Belg/Lux | 29 |
| <u>Raw Materials</u> | <u>61</u> |
| Canada | 22 |
| Italy | 9 |
| Finland | 6 |
| United States | 3 |
| <u>Fuels</u> | <u>573</u> |
| Italy | 440 |
| Netherlands | 17 |
| United States | 0 |
| <u>Semifinished Goods and Chemicals</u> | <u>1,807</u> |
| Italy | 472 |
| West Germany | 210 |
| France | 142 |
| Japan | 137 |
| United States | 64 |
| <u>Machinery</u> | <u>1,693</u> |
| Italy | 430 |
| West Germany | 375 |
| United Kingdom | 220 |
| United States | 158 |
| <u>Transport Equipment</u> | <u>969</u> |
| Italy | 379 |
| West Germany | 334 |
| France | 75 |
| United Kingdom | 39 |
| United States | 27 |
| <u>Consumer Goods</u> | <u>381</u> |
| Italy | 148 |
| Spain | 56 |
| United Kingdom | 48 |
| United States | 9 |

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Libya: Current Account Balance (Billion US\$)

| | 1978 | 1979 | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 ^a | 1984 |
|---|------|------|-------|-------|------|-------------------|------|
| Trade Balance | 2.7 | 5.8 | 12.2 | -1.3 | 4.1 | 2.3 | 2.0 |
| Exports (f.o.b.) | 9.7 | 15.3 | 22.8 | 15.2 | 13.6 | 11.2 | 11.0 |
| Oil | 9.7 | 15.3 | 22.8 | 15.2 | 13.6 | 11.2 | 11.0 |
| non-oil | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.0 |
| Imports (f.o.b.) | -7.0 | -9.5 | -10.6 | -16.5 | -9.5 | -8.9 | -8.0 |
| Non-Communist | 5.0 | 6.9 | 8.5 | 13.2 | 6.7 | 6.1 | 6.0 |
| military | 0.6 | 0.3 | 0.9 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.6 | -- |
| Communist, non-military | 0.6 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 1.4 | 1.0 |
| Soviet | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.4 | -- |
| Other | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 1.0 | -- |
| Communist, military | 1.4 | 2.2 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.0 |
| Soviet | 1.2 | 1.9 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 0.8 | 0.8 | -- |
| Other | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.6 | -- |
| Net Services | -1.7 | -1.8 | -1.5 | -3.1 | -3.0 | -3.4 | -3.0 |
| Freight and Insurance | -0.8 | -1.1 | -1.3 | -1.8 | -1.1 | -1.0 | -1.0 |
| Investment Income Receipts ^b | 0.4 | 0.8 | 1.3 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 0.3 | 0.0 |
| Other | -1.3 | -1.5 | -1.6 | -2.9 | -3.2 | -3.2 | -3.0 |
| Grants | -0.2 | 0.2 | -0.3 | -0.4 | -0.5 | -0.4 | -0.0 |
| Current Account Balance | 0.8 | 3.8 | 10.4 | -4.3 | 0.6 | -1.5 | -1.0 |
| Capital Account Balance | -1.5 | -1.6 | -3.6 | 0.7 | -2.5 | -0.6 | -0.0 |
| Change in Reserves | -0.7 | 2.2 | 6.3 | -4.1 | -1.9 | -2.1 | -2.0 |

^aEstimated assuming average oil production of 1.19 million b/d and average price of \$28.49 per barrel.

^bEarnings from official assets only.

^cProjected assuming average oil production of 1.22 million b/d and average price of \$27.58 per barrel.

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Libya: Trade with the USSR, Eastern Europe and North Korea

Million US \$

| | | <u>1981</u> | <u>1982</u> | <u>1983^b</u> |
|--|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| <u>Exports to Libya (F.O.B.)</u> | | | | |
| USSR | Non-military | 264 | 305 | 356 |
| | Military | 1,099 | 791 | 444 |
| Bulgaria | Non-military | 572 | 542 | 504 |
| | Military | 80 | 130 | 95 |
| Czechoslovakia | Non-military | 208 | 175 | NA |
| | Military | 44 | 144 | 219 |
| East Germany | Non-military | NA | NA | NA |
| | Military | NA | NA | 18 |
| Hungary | Non-military | 85 | 62 | 48 |
| | Military | NA | 50 | 67 |
| Poland | Non-military | 175 | 234 | 207 |
| | Military | 143 | 97 | NEG |
| Romania | Non-military | 223 | 147 | NA |
| | Military | 88 | 47 | 29 |
| Yugoslavia | Non-military | 271 | 178 | 225 |
| | Military | 40 | 71 | 46 |
| North Korea | Non-military | 15 | 25 | NA |
| | Military | 133 | 90 | 33 |
| Sub-Total | Non-military | 1,813 | 1,663 | 1,340 |
| | Military | 1,627 | 1,420 | 1,001 |
| Total | | 3,440 | 2,904 | 2,341 |
| <u>Imports from Libya (C.I.F.)^a</u> | | | | |
| USSR | Non-military | 502 | 1,551 | 1,363 |
| Bulgaria | Non-military | 217 | 146 | 239 |
| Czechoslovakia | Non-military | NEG | NEG | NA |
| East Germany | Non-military | NA | NA | NA |
| Hungary | Non-military | .9 | 128 | 360 |
| Poland | Non-military | NEG | NEG | 223 |
| Romania | Non-military | 327 | 287 | NA |
| Yugoslavia | Non-military | 299 | 409 | 317 |
| North Korea | Non-military | NEG | NEG | NA |
| Total | Non-military | 1,345.9 | 2,521 | 2,507 |

a. Trade records do not indicate that these communist countries import military goods from Libya.

b. Preliminary mid-year estimates (Jan. to June)

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Libya's Qadhafi: The Challenge to US and Western Interests

Special National Intelligence Estimate

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*SNIE 36.5-85
March 1985*

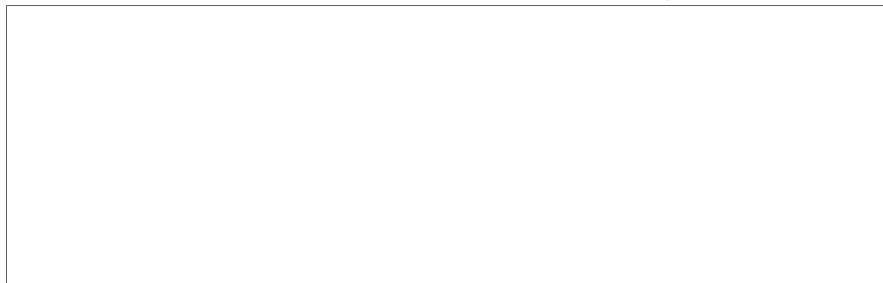
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LIBYA'S QADHAFI: THE CHALLENGE TO US AND WESTERN INTERESTS

Information available as of 28 February 1985 was used in the preparation of this Estimate, which was approved by the National Foreign Intelligence Board on that date.

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The Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the intelligence organization of the Department of State.

Also Participating:

The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army

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SCOPE NOTE

Diplomatic and other foreign policy initiatives undertaken by Libyan leader Qadhafi over the past few years suggest a greater focus on undermining US interests. This Estimate addresses policies Qadhafi is likely to pursue over the next 18 months, threats those policies will pose to other states—both regionally and around the world—and their impact on US interests. It also assesses Qadhafi's personality and motivations, his susceptibility and reaction to external pressure, and his relationship to the USSR and other radical states.

iii

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25X1

CONTENTS

| | <i>Page</i> |
|---|-------------|
| SCOPE NOTE | iii |
| KEY JUDGMENTS | 1 |
| DISCUSSION | 7 |
| Character of Qadhafi's Foreign Involvement | 7 |
| Libyan Capabilities and Constraints | 8 |
| Qadhafi's Military Reach | 8 |
| The Economic Factor | 11 |
| Political Capabilities | 12 |
| Libyan Diplomatic Style | 12 |
| Qadhafi's Allies | 13 |
| The USSR | 13 |
| Third World Radicals | 14 |
| The Libyan Threat | 15 |
| Targets in the Middle East and North Africa | 16 |
| Targets in Sub-Saharan Africa | 19 |
| Targets in Central America and the Caribbean | 20 |
| Targets in Asia and Oceania | 20 |
| Qadhafi's Prospects | 20 |
| Some Recent Successes | 20 |
| Negative Prospects | 21 |
| What Could Blunt Qadhafi's Efforts | 21 |
| Qadhafi's Opponents: Limited Strength but Growing Support | 22 |
| Capt Operatives | 22 |
| Recommendations for the United States | 22 |
| APPENDIX Chronology of Libyan Troublemaking, 1980-84 | 25 |

SECRET

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25X1

KEY JUDGMENTS

During the past few years, Libyan leader Col. Mu'ammar Qadhafi has increasingly identified the United States as a key threat to his regime and as a major obstacle capable of thwarting his ambitions in the region and beyond.¹ While Qadhafi's fundamental goals have not changed, he has devoted increasing efforts to trying to counter perceived US pressures by moving against US interests on a worldwide basis and by working with other anti-US radical states.

Qadhafi has enjoyed considerable success recently in combining anti-US moves with exploitation of diplomatic and political/military opportunities that strengthen his ties to US allies—thereby reducing US influence with those allies on Libyan policy.

We believe that Qadhafi in the coming 18 months will continue to pursue a multifaceted policy that could have significant impact on US interests worldwide. We expect him to:

- Continue subversion—possibly accompanied by carrot-and-stick efforts at co-option—against such unstable regional states as Chad, Sudan, and Tunisia, where he will continue to have significant impact.

Seek new opportunities for increasing influence within Morocco as long as the Libyan-Moroccan union lasts—influence that Qadhafi will try to exploit when the union ultimately founders and he turns sharply against King Hassan.

Make diplomatic overtures to West European states designed to play on their desire for potentially lucrative trade with Libya—and to stymie any coordinated US effort to bring pressure to bear on the Qadhafi regime.

Pursue common goals with other radical states—particularly Iran, Syria, Cuba, North Korea, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, or possibly the PDRY (South Yemen)—against US interests globally.

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- Continue support to rebel or dissident movements in pro-Western countries as farflung as the Philippines, New Caledonia, Pakistan, and Zaire, where Libyan influence is limited. Qadhafi is also funding leftist opposition political groups in the Western Hemisphere, in countries such as Dominica, St. Lucia, and Costa Rica.

Qadhafi believes he has successfully manipulated the disparate interests of several key NATO allies—France, Italy, Greece, and Turkey—to help ensure their continued neutrality toward him. A major objective of Qadhafi's efforts to improve ties to Europe will be to gain access to Western military equipment and spare parts for embargoed US materials. We are particularly concerned about Libya's apparently expanding intelligence ties to Greece, and about Libya's enhanced military relations with Italy, Greece, and Turkey. The Libyan defense agreement with Malta bears watching.

Qadhafi's focus on the United States has stemmed partially from his perception of an increasingly hostile US administration determined to limit his reach and to weaken his position. Qadhafi demonstrated his willingness to directly target US personnel and installations in the 1970s—in at least Sudan, Egypt, and Italy—but backed off when he knew the United States had learned of his plans and would retaliate against him. Currently, we believe Qadhafi would directly target US personnel or installations if:

- He believed he could get away with the attack without US retaliation.
- He believed that the United States was engaged in a direct threat to his person or was actively attempting to overthrow his regime.

Qadhafi's success so far in countering US policy toward Libya in Western Europe and, to a lesser extent, in the Arab world will encourage him to take greater risks in his efforts against US interests. He may become more willing to back terrorist operations against US personnel or facilities or to order his armed forces to respond to what he deems "provocative" US military activities near Libya. In any military confrontation with Washington, Qadhafi would cast Libya as a small Arab country victimized by a superpower in an attempt to weaken US influence in the Arab world. Such a posture would meet with very little practical response in Arab capitals, however, except from radical comrades-in-arms.

The increasing inclination by Qadhafi to implement operations that cause an international uproar and project an image of Libyan

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power impacts on the credibility of US economic and security commitments. Qadhafi's actions are likely to prompt persistent requests by US friends in Africa and the Arab world for immediate military and economic assistance to lessen their vulnerability to Libyan pressure. Moderate leaders, particularly Arabs, risk discrediting themselves with repeated and desperate calls for US support. By demonstrating their dependence on the United States, they highlight the failure of their economic and security policies and may promote popular opposition to close US ties. Under such circumstances, continued Libyan pressure, mixed with blandishments, could prompt some pro-US governments—such as Sudan and Tunisia—to adopt a more nonaligned posture.

Qadhafi's continued disregard for international law and convention—reneging on international agreements, abusing diplomatic privilege for terrorist purposes, and blatant use of violence against opponents—undermines international norms of behavior and may, over time, encourage other states or groups to do likewise. The international perception of a gap between US rhetorical criticism of Qadhafi's behavior and actual US policy toward him also undermines US credibility on this issue.

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- To make Libya the dominant state in North Africa.
- To establish Libyan political leadership in black Africa, eliminating the French position and influence there.
- To spread his vision of Islam as an instrument to rally the oppressed of the Third World against colonialism and imperialism.

Essentially, Qadhafi is not controllable. He believes his own precepts, and no array of external pressures is likely to alter his policy goals or his will to adventurism. He is independent of real restraint from his close advisers. A fundamental belief in the righteousness of his cause prevents compromise, and his recent foreign policy successes encourage him to stay the course. Increased political and economic pressure have not permanently modified his behavior. Although he may temporarily back down under threat of strong retaliation, opposition enhances his feelings of self-importance and increases his determination to take revenge.

Nonetheless, oil production is the mainstay of Libya's economy and the ultimate source of its political and economic influence. The abrupt withdrawal of US oil and service companies from Libya could result in a substantial short-term drop in the country's oil production. Any resulting production decline, however, is likely to be temporary and to inflict only limited hardship on the government because Libya could rely on increasingly skilled domestic personnel and workers from Western Europe and Canada for assistance.

Although Libya's oil-derived income has dropped sharply in the last few years because of the soft world oil market, Qadhafi will continue to have sufficient funds to support most of his subversive, terrorist, diplomatic, and political activities. He will be forced, however, to be more selective in providing larger handouts—although even modest sums by Libyan standards can have major impact on impoverished African and Latin American states. He will continue to provide significant economic support to friendly states under US pressure.

Libya greatly values its relationship with the USSR. The massive amounts of weapons Qadhafi has purchased have been supplied overwhelmingly by the Soviets. Tripoli will continue to look to Moscow for many types of sophisticated weaponry that have been denied Libya by Western manufacturers. Soviet technicians keep a large portion of Libya's most sophisticated weapons operable, while Soviet instructors help Libyan operators develop the skills to use the weapons effectively.

Qadhafi also seems to hope that his ties to Moscow will offer some protection from the United States. He probably hopes that allowing

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Soviet warships and military aircraft to use Libyan facilities since 1981 suggests that he enjoys Soviet protection, although Moscow has scrupulously avoided giving him such a commitment.

Moscow, for its part, has broadly benefited from its relations with Tripoli, despite occasional complications to Soviet policy from some of Qadhafi's actions. In particular, Qadhafi's efforts to undermine Western interests in various parts of the world generally coincide with the USSR's own aims. Arms sales to Libya remain a major source of hard currency for the Soviets.

Mutual distrust inhibits more active Libyan-Soviet cooperation. Senior Soviet officials have frequently expressed frustration with Qadhafi's unpredictability. Both sides, however, appear to believe that the benefits outweigh the costs. Moscow can reap the range of benefits it

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conception, planning, and execution of this broad range of international contacts requiring a relatively detailed grasp of worldwide operational intelligence. The US Intelligence Community needs to consider the sources of influence and advice to Qadhafi that enable him to draft and pursue his policies—including the possibility of policy-planning assistance from other radical states or the Soviet Bloc.

Qadhafi's continued adventurism—whether driven by frustration or the momentum of success—could ultimately bring about his downfall. In several key areas, Qadhafi may overreach himself, possibly triggering more concerted external opposition against him. Further actions against Egypt, for example, would dramatically increase the risk of decisive retaliation from Cairo. A blatant military failure could prompt a move against Qadhafi by his own forces. Moreover, his lawless behavior has already increased the inclination of several states to sponsor Libyan dissidents.

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DISCUSSION

Character of Qadhafi's Foreign Involvement

1. Libyan leader Qadhafi has been determined to play a leading role in eliminating Western political influence in the Third World ever since he seized power 15 years ago. He sees himself as a leader and agent of historic forces that will reorder both Libyan society and Third World politics. His vision provides both a motive and a rationale for providing military and financial aid to radical regimes, and for undermining moderate governments by supporting—or creating—subversive groups and on occasion abetting international terrorists. His deep-rooted sense of mis-

- The aerial bombing in March 1984 of a radio station near Khartoum, Sudan, and the mining of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Suez in July 1984.
 - Increased support for subversion in Sudan, Somalia, and Zaire (the first black African state to reestablish diplomatic relations with Israel).
 - Eliminating the threat from Libyan dissidents at home and in exile. Examples of Qadhafi's determination to end opposition activity include:
 - His intense security crackdown following the abortive May 1984 coup attempt.
 - Libyan pressure on West Europeans and on moderate Arabs such as Morocco, Tunisia, and Saudi Arabia to return dissidents to Tripoli.
 - The renewed campaign to kill Libyan exiles in Europe in 1984.
 - Libyan attempts to smuggle weapons and explosives into Saudi Arabia for use against Libyan dissidents during the 1984 Muslim pilgrimage.
 - Establishing Libyan political leadership in Africa and eradicating French influence and presence there. Qadhafi has pursued this objective by:
 - Plotting against Chadian President Habre and reneging on his agreement with France to withdraw from northern Chad last November.
 - Making political overtures designed to exploit growing uncertainties in West Africa over French security commitments.
 - Strengthening fellow radicals under US pressure. Libyan political, military, and economic support for Nicaragua is an example of Qadhafi's pursuit of this objective.
3. Qadhafi's actions during the past two years have been heavily focused on undermining US and, to a lesser extent, French interests and policies—the principal impediments to his broader aims. At the root of his longstanding hostility toward the United States is

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Washington's support of Israel and his view of the United States as the center of world imperialism. Qadhafi also perceives US influence over moderate Arab regimes as precluding any hope of uniting the Arabs in a more militant stand against Israel—one of his most cherished objectives. Qadhafi's opposition to France, on the other hand, stems largely from his belief that French political predominance in France's former African colonies is thwarting his ambitions for regional leadership.

4. Qadhafi's longstanding antagonism toward Washington has developed into a personal hatred of the current US administration. He is particularly concerned about what he regards as Washington's acute lack of consideration for Arab concerns and its militant posture toward Libya and other radicals around the world. A number of factors influence Qadhafi's assessment:

- Public US condemnation of his regime and US attempts to impose diplomatic and economic sanctions against it.
- The shootdown of two Libyan fighter aircraft by US pilots in 1981 and the continuing US military challenge to Libya's territorial claims over the Gulf of Sidra.
- Washington's continuing rebuff of unpublicized Libyan political overtures.
- US intervention in Egypt and Sudan to thwart his threats to those countries.
- Washington's campaign to deprive Qadhafi of the chairmanship of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1982 and 1983.
- US opposition to the radical Sandinista regime in Nicaragua.
- US military intervention in Grenada.

5. Qadhafi also believes that Washington is working toward his removal. A series of security incidents in Libya, beginning in late 1983 and culminating in the unsuccessful attack on his headquarters last May, has heightened Qadhafi's fears that Libyan exiles will exploit rising popular discontent in Libya. Qadhafi views the exiles as the tools of the United States and the moderate Arabs, and his fear of the exiles is out of proportion to their capability to topple him.

Libyan Capabilities and Constraints

6. Qadhafi's pursuit of his immediate objectives is accompanied by a more realistic sense of how he can

use Libya's limited political and military capabilities and financial resources. His reappraisal almost certainly stems in part from his long list of past foreign policy failures. His difficulty in creating viable political unions (the union with Morocco in August 1984 was at King Hassan's initiative), his failure to become OAU chairman in June 1983, and strong US opposition have given Qadhafi a greater appreciation of the political constraints he faces. In addition, his disastrous military adventure in Uganda in 1979 underscored the inability of Libyan forces to project a sustained military presence beyond the country's contiguous neighbors. Finally, Qadhafi's unsuccessful efforts to translate financial aid into lasting political influence in most regions or to promote revolutions by dispensing money to subversive groups have encouraged him to give greater focus to how he uses Libya's declining financial resources.

Qadhafi's Military Reach

7. Libya is marginally capable of projecting military force beyond its immediate neighbors. Training, manning, and maintenance limitations preclude projecting a major Libyan presence farther away than Chad or Niger. Qadhafi, however, can use his limited air or naval assets to disrupt, embarrass, or intimidate Third World countries in the region. (See map on page 10.) Physical damage caused in most of these attacks, barring a lucky hit, would be slight, but Qadhafi almost certainly would use them to underscore his opponent's military vulnerability.

8. Several assets are available to Qadhafi for strikes well beyond Libya's borders:

- TU-22 bombers. These aircraft have a combat radius of over 1,500 nautical miles and can reach into central Africa, Southwest Asia, and Europe. A pair of TU-22s, conducting a surprise attack, could inflict considerable damage on a target of opportunity. Finding and destroying a selected target—such as an embassy or a dam—are probably beyond the capabilities of Libya's TU-22 crews, however. The Libyan TU-22 that struck Omdurman, Sudan, in 1984 failed to seriously damage the designated target—a large radio and TV station—because of poor crew training and a lack of guided munitions.
- Naval mines. Libyan (or Libyan-chartered) merchant ships could plant mines covertly in shallow maritime chokepoints anywhere in the world. A single ship could sow 100 or so mines with little difficulty if precision were not a prerequisite. Libya's recent mining of the Red Sea and the

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Gulf of Suez illustrates the disruptive capacity of such an operation. Libyan submarines, warships, bombers, and transport aircraft could each sow a small number of mines in the Mediterranean but at greater risk and with less effect.

- Frogmen. Libyan frogmen could be carried anywhere in the world on merchant ships. They are reported to be well trained in underwater demolition and long-distance swimming, and could sink moored ships or conduct limited sabotage ashore.
- Submarines. Libya's small fleet of F-class submarines could covertly deliver small numbers of

mines or frogmen nearly anywhere along the Mediterranean littoral. They could also identify and sink a particular ship at anchor. Given their poor state of training, however, Libyan submarine crewmen would have only a slim chance of finding and sinking a specific ship on the open seas with torpedoes.

- Conventional forces. Except for Chad, Qadhafi has been unwilling to commit a large military force outside Libya since his disastrous intervention in Uganda in 1979. He is willing, however, to send a small force—up to 1,400 men—to areas where an ally is willing to host them. A small

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Libyan Military Reach

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number of Libyan troops helped Syrian forces drive mainstream PLO units out of northern Lebanon in 1983. The presence of such troops may increase Libyan prestige and influence in a regional conflict, but would rarely affect the military balance.

9. We believe that Qadhafi will use these military assets only for isolated and infrequent attacks. The occasional use of tactics such as the Omdurman bombing or the Red Sea mining offers him an important element of deniability. Frequent use, however, would increase Libya's vulnerability to exposure and retaliation.

The Economic Factor

10. The prolonged slump in the international oil market has diminished—but not eliminated—the economic leverage Qadhafi has in his international dealings. The sharp decline in Libya's foreign exchange reserves from \$14 billion in 1981 to \$3.5 billion in 1985 has made him more aware of the tradeoffs in providing financial assistance, and he has responded by threatening to cut off funds to groups that refuse to adopt a more militant posture toward pro-Western governments and the United States. At the same time, he has come through with sizable amounts of money—over \$300 million to Ethiopia and approximately \$400 million to Nicaragua—to governments he believes are vulnerable to US economic pressure.

11. Although the Libyan economy faces severe difficulties, it still has a "boom" atmosphere compared with other economies in the region. Libya's potential as a source of hard currency has been instrumental in luring Morocco and several West European governments into improving relations with Tripoli, despite a large backlog of unpaid bills and efforts to barter petroleum in exchange for imports. Should lower oil revenues further restrict Libya's liquidity, however, Qadhafi's access to, and success with, West European governments will diminish.

12. Money is not the only source of economic leverage at Qadhafi's disposal. Approximately 500,000 expatriates currently hold jobs in Libya, mostly as manual laborers. Table 1 shows the approximate numbers of expatriates, by nationality, in Libya in 1984. Morocco's King Hassan cited the prospect of more jobs for Moroccans in Libya as an important factor in his willingness to propose union with Qadhafi. Qadhafi also has used the threat to expel Tunisian and Turkish expatriate workers in an effort to intimidate their governments into responding to his political overtures.

Table 1
Expatriates in Libya, 1984

| | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Egyptians | 180,000 |
| Tunisians | 70,000 |
| Soviets and East Europeans | 70,000 |
| Turks | 60,000 |
| South Koreans | 18,000 |
| Sudanese | 18,000 |
| Italians | 15,000 |
| Moroccans | 10,000 |
| British | 8,500 |
| West Germans | 4,000 |
| French | 3,000 |
| Greeks | 2,000 |
| Americans | 1,000 |

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13. Qadhafi's ability to use access to Libya's high-quality crude oil as a foreign policy tool has been sharply limited. As a result of refinery modernization in Europe and the United States, Libya's oil now accounts for only a small percentage of most consumers' oil imports and could be replaced easily. Table 2 indicates the Communist and non-Communist countries purchasing Libyan oil in December 1984.

14. Qadhafi probably could increase his influence with poorer, Third World countries if he gave them Libyan oil or sold it to them at cut-rate prices, but he has not yet chosen to employ his petroleum resources in this manner as a foreign policy tool. Moreover, in its dealings with Third World governments, Tripoli has established a reputation as an unreliable supplier and for being stingy with price or other financial concessions. Qadhafi's ability to use oil as a weapon would increase quickly, however, if supplies from the Persian Gulf were cut off. Libya has 25 percent of available non-Communist excess oil capacity outside the Persian Gulf, and production—currently at 57 percent of sustainable capacity—could be increased in a matter of weeks.

15. Qadhafi also has little leverage in nonoil trade. Table 3 shows trade with Libya by selected non-Communist countries in 1984. Libya accounts for only small percentages of its partners' international trade, with the exception of Italy, Spain, Turkey, and Greece. The Libyan leader, however, has been able to use the prospect of substantial purchases of military hardware to his advantage in dealing with various West European governments.

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Table 2
Purchasers of Libyan Oil,
1 December 1984

*1,000 barrels
per day*

| | Liftings of Libyan Oil | Percent of Purchaser's Oil Imports |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Communist states (total) | 170 | |
| Bulgaria | 25 | 11 |
| Romania | 8 | 4 |
| Yugoslavia | 37 | 18 |
| USSR ^a | 100 | 40 |
| Non-Communist states (total) | 736 | |
| Austria | 25 | 16 |
| Brazil | 20 | 7 |
| France | 80 | 6 |
| Greece | 20 | 16 |
| Italy ^b | 232 | 15 |
| South Korea | 40 | 6 |
| Spain | 40 | 7 |
| Syria | 55 | 35 |
| Turkey | 60 | 13 |
| United Kingdom | 20 | 4 |
| West Germany | 144 | 10 |
| Libyan consumption | 118 | |
| Total production | 1,024 | |

^a The USSR accepts Libyan oil in barter for arms. This oil is shipped directly to Soviet clients in Eastern Europe—primarily Bulgaria and Yugoslavia—and little or no Libyan oil is used domestically in the USSR.

^b Italy resells about half of its Libyan oil to third parties.

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16. Oil is the mainstay of Libya's economy and the ultimate source of its international political and economic influence. Libya remains vulnerable to the vicissitudes of the international oil market, which alone has taken the greatest toll on the economy. The regime could face severe financial problems this year if oil prices or exports declined sharply.

17. Four US oil companies still operate in Libya. Although these firms help to maintain Libya's productive capacity, their withdrawal would not damage operations or hinder *long-term* oil production. A coordinated trade embargo including West European countries and US subsidiaries abroad would be necessary to significantly reduce Libya's oil production below the current level.

18. The abrupt withdrawal of US oil and service companies could result in a substantial short-term drop

in Libyan oil production by as much as 500,000 barrels a day. (A phased withdrawal would be much less successful.) Any resulting production decline, however, would probably be temporary and inflict only limited hardship on the government because Libya could rely on increasingly skilled domestic personnel and workers from Western Europe and Canada for assistance. Much of the foreign labor force of US oil firms operating in Libya probably could be persuaded to remain.

Political Capabilities

19. Qadhafi's ability to project political power is based on his military arsenal and oil revenues, and his willingness to use them in support of revolutionary causes. Qadhafi has created for himself a reputation for ruthlessness and for exploiting the domestic vulnerabilities of Third World regimes that will not do his bidding. In general, the intimidating effect of Qadhafi's will to adventurism diminishes the farther away from Libya he tries to exert his influence. African states feel the most threatened. Qadhafi's ties to local leaders and political groups in South Asia or the Caribbean, on the other hand, are driven more by the prospect of financial assistance than by fear.

20. Qadhafi has limited powers of political persuasion. His pretensions to be the successor to Egypt's Gamal Abd al-Nasir as a charismatic leader of non-aligned nations frequently lead him to rely on the strength of his personality alone and to overplay his hand. His abrasive and heavyhanded exhortations and lectures to foreign statesmen generally alienate the very leaders he is trying to court. In the Arab world, certain aspects of his moralizing—particularly on Arab-Israeli issues—strike a responsive chord, and some Arab leaders would feel obliged to give him pro forma support if he were attacked militarily by the United States. Nonetheless, most Arab leaders would greet Qadhafi's demise with relief and pleasure.

Libyan Diplomatic Style

21. Qadhafi's ventures into diplomacy are hampered by his stranglehold over an inept and mismanaged foreign policy decisionmaking establishment. His personal conduct of foreign policy has rendered it erratic and sometimes ill formed. Visits by foreign dignitaries often are uncoordinated with relevant agencies. Protocol arrangements frequently are ignored. Appointments with Qadhafi are canceled with little notice. Promises of financial aid to foreign governments or dissident groups often go unfulfilled because they were not cleared in advance with Qadha-

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Table 3
Trade With Libya by
Selected Non-Communist Countries, 1984^a

Million US \$
(except as indicated)

| | Exports to Libya | Percent of Exports | Imports From Libya ^b | Percent of Imports |
|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Italy | 1,730 | 2.4 | 3,070 | 3.8 |
| West Germany | 775 | 0.5 | 2,240 | 1.5 |
| Japan | 395 | 0.3 | NEGL | NEGL |
| United Kingdom | 308 | 0.3 | 240 | 0.3 |
| South Korea | 265 | 0.9 | 320 | 1.0 |
| Spain | 250 | 1.3 | 980 | 3.4 |
| France | 201 | 0.2 | 870 | 0.8 |
| United States | 197 | 0.1 | 10 | NEGL |
| Netherlands | 185 | 0.3 | 330 | 0.5 |
| Turkey | 170 | 2.6 | 589 | 5.8 |
| Austria | 102 | 0.7 | 190 | 1.0 |
| Switzerland | 101 | 0.4 | 460 | 1.6 |
| Greece | 90 | 2.0 | 70 | 0.7 |
| Ireland | 64 | 0.7 | NEGL | NEGL |

^a Estimated.

^b Virtually all oil.

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fi, or because he changed his mind or was misunderstood by his deputies.

22. The situation has been exacerbated since Qadhafi dismantled Libya's traditional diplomatic establishment in 1979. The replacing of embassies by "people's bureaus," manned largely by noncareer diplomats, has alienated many governments. Many of the personnel—some little more than thugs—are pro-Qadhafi extremists who share his contempt for diplomatic procedure. Some appear to have virtually a free hand in dispensing large sums of money and running clandestine operations. Recommendations of the few experienced diplomats still in place are frequently ignored.

23. Qadhafi's appointment of Abd al-Salam al-Turayki, formerly Libya's UN Ambassador, as Foreign Minister in 1984 is slowly improving Libya's tarnished political image in the international community. Turayki has worked assiduously to restore the Foreign Ministry's influence with Qadhafi and to minimize the number of pro-Qadhafi zealots assigned to diplomatic posts abroad. Turayki's broad contacts among diplomats throughout the world has made him a key Qadhafi emissary.

Qadhafi's Allies

The USSR

24. The Soviet Union's willingness to sell Qadhafi large quantities of weapons—about \$15 billion since the early 1970s—provides him with the military wherewithal to pursue his radical objectives. Tripoli continues to look to Moscow for many types of sophisticated weapons that have been denied Libya by Western manufacturers. Soviet technicians keep many of Libya's most sophisticated weapons operable, while Soviet instructors help Libyan operators develop the skills to use the weapons effectively.

25. Qadhafi probably also believes that a close relationship with Moscow will offer some protection from the United States. He probably hopes that allowing Soviet warships and military aircraft to use Libyan facilities since 1981 suggests that he enjoys Soviet protection, although Moscow has scrupulously avoided giving him such a commitment. Qadhafi periodically tries to play the "Soviet card" against the United States—as he did in 1984—by announcing that he might open the Libyan coast to the Soviets and "give" them facilities.

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26. Qadhafi is unlikely to "give" facilities to the Soviets—he has long condemned the use of Arab territory for foreign military bases—but probably hopes that such threats will deter Washington from increasing pressure on his regime. If he perceived a growing external threat to Libya, however, he probably would offer Moscow significantly increased access to Libyan facilities, possibly including use of the large Soviet-built Al Jufra fighter/bomber base now nearing completion. We do not believe, however, that the Soviets have told Qadhafi that they would assist him in a confrontation with the United States. Indeed, Moscow has refused to support Libya's claims regarding its "territorial waters" in the Gulf of Sidra.

27. Moscow, for its part, has largely benefited from its relations with Tripoli, although Qadhafi's actions have complicated Soviet policy at times. Qadhafi's efforts to undermine US interests in various parts of the world generally coincide with the USSR's own aims. Examples of Libyan activities that indirectly serve the Soviets by aiding US opponents and threatening US-supported governments include:

- Direct military intervention in Chad.
- Provision of arms to Sudanese and Somali dissidents and to Nicaragua.
- Aid to Pakistani terrorists who seek to overthrow President Zia.

28. Moscow also has acquired considerable military and economic benefits from its ties to Tripoli. Soviet-Libyan military cooperation has expanded since the US-Libyan air clash over the Gulf of Sidra, and the Soviets now frequently use Libyan air and naval facilities to monitor US military movements in the eastern Mediterranean. The approximately 50,000 Soviet and East European technicians in Libya earn considerable hard currency that supplements the substantial sums their countries earn from selling arms to Tripoli.

29. Nevertheless, the Soviets avoid explicit association with Qadhafi's adventures and do not always support his regional policies:

- Moscow denied a request to help transport Libyan troops into Chad in 1983.
- The USSR, which generally restricts the transfer of its major weapon systems, has cautioned Tripoli about selling such equipment to Iran for use against another valued Soviet customer, Iraq.
- Moscow supports PLO chief Arafat and a negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, while

Qadhafi backs radical Palestinians who reject compromise.

- The Soviets probably also are concerned that Libya's union with Morocco will complicate Soviet-Algerian relations.

30. Mutual distrust inhibits more active Libyan-Soviet cooperation. Senior Soviet officials have frequently expressed frustration with Qadhafi's unpredictability. Both sides, however, appear to believe that the benefits outweigh the costs. Moscow can reap the range of benefits it derives from Qadhafi's anti-Western activity around the world while officially remaining uncommitted and distanced from those activities. Tripoli, in turn, can maintain its own independence of action while receiving Soviet arms and security support.

Third World Radicals

31. Unlike his ties to Moscow, Qadhafi's links to other radical regimes in the Middle East and elsewhere in the Third World give him little in terms of economic or military benefits. He clearly values the political support these radicals give him, however, and may feel that such support deters regional moderates from taking action against him.

32. Competing philosophies and egos have limited the extent of cooperation among Third World radicals, and we expect these limitations to continue. We do not believe, however, that Qadhafi's allies would support him in a confrontation with the United States, beyond providing rhetoric and diplomatic initiatives in international bodies such as the UN. The use of US military force against Libya, however, probably would prompt Qadhafi to press for joint terrorist operations against US interests.

33. *Iran.* The Iranian regime's anti-US focus is likely to lead to expanded contacts with Libya at the working level, but Qadhafi's role in the disappearance in 1978 of Lebanese Shia leader Musa Sadr while on a trip to Libya, and Tehran's distaste for Qadhafi's ideology, will continue to limit cooperation. There is considerable speculation about Iranian support for Libyan terrorist and intelligence operations, but we do not know if both parties have participated in either the planning or implementation stages. At the same time, the use of Shia terrorism against US facilities and personnel in Lebanon and Kuwait may embolden Qadhafi in the direction of further anti-US plots, and we cannot rule out Tehran's providing some logistic support.

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34. *Syria.* Qadhafi has been somewhat more successful in gaining support from the Syrians. Damascus has provided enough pilots to man a MIG-23 squadron since 1979, when Qadhafi feared he was vulnerable to Egyptian attack and requested such support. This unit is one of the best in the Libyan Air Force and frequently responds to US air and ship movements off the Libyan coast. We believe that Damascus would allow Qadhafi to use these pilots to defend Libyan-claimed territorial rights and airspace in an encounter with US forces. Qadhafi values Syrian political support in international forums and will welcome any efforts by Damascus to upset movement toward peace negotiations with Israel by moderate Arabs.

35. Although Tripoli, Damascus, and Tehran are talking about increased cooperation against Iraq and Israel, moving from rhetoric to action will be difficult. Neither Qadhafi nor Syrian President Assad wants to see a Shia regime under Tehran's influence emerge in Iraq or in Lebanon. At the same time, Iran and Syria are suspicious of Qadhafi's motives in concluding a union agreement with Morocco last August.

36. *Ethiopia.* Ethiopia—which formed a Tripartite Alliance with Libya and South Yemen in August 1981—is of considerable utility to Qadhafi in supporting subversion against regional moderates. Ethiopia is the main conduit for Libyan arms, equipment, and funds supplied to the Sudanese insurgents, as well as to Somali dissident groups. Libyans based in Addis Ababa probably also have been involved in the onward shipment of weapons in support of terrorist or guerrilla operations elsewhere in Africa.

37. Despite indications of some unhappiness between Addis Ababa and Tripoli, we anticipate that Ethiopian leader Mengistu will continue to support Qadhafi's efforts to topple the Sudanese and Somali leaderships and to voice support for Libyan-backed Chadian dissidents, but not to become involved in other Libyan initiatives. Libya has already provided Ethiopia over \$300 million in foreign exchange, and Addis Ababa does not want to jeopardize promises of an additional \$500 million in project assistance.

38. *South Yemen.* Relations with the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen), Libya's other partner in the Tripartite Alliance, have deteriorated because of Tripoli's renegeing on promised economic aid and meddling in Aden's internal politics. Qadhafi's attempts to convince Aden to reactivate the National Democratic Front against the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) and to provide it with Libyan arms are not likely to be successful at present. How-

ever, if hardline ex-President Ismail returns and radical elements again become dominant in the Aden government, Libyan-South Yemeni cooperation could be revived and directed against moderate states of the Arabian Peninsula.

39. *North Korea.* Qadhafi's relations with North Korea have been surprisingly active and are based largely on a common desire to undermine US interests. Although the closeness of the ties is difficult to gauge because of serious gaps in information, available evidence does suggest that cooperation exists on military and security matters. P'yongyang also may have provided limited support last year for at least one Libyan terrorist plot. We believe that Qadhafi will continue to seek North Korean assistance in selected instances because such aid is useful in concealing Libyan involvement. As many as 100 North Korean military personnel are in Libya, and up to several hundred others are engaged in economic activity.

40. *Cuba.* Havana probably welcomes Libya's participation in opposing US interests in Central America and will work with Tripoli to provide military equipment and training to radical elements in the region. Beyond these areas, however, cooperation is likely to be limited. Qadhafi and Castro have never developed close personal ties because of their inflated egos and different revolutionary philosophies. Moreover, Havana sees as poorly timed and counterproductive the current Libyan pressure on Caribbean leftists to be more militant. Cuba may believe that violent anti-US activity in the Caribbean will be perceived in Washington as directed from Havana and could prompt a strong US response.

The Libyan Threat

41. Although his ambitions well outrun his capabilities, Qadhafi's role in fostering terrorism and instability and in abetting conflicts, even on a regional scale, is one of the most prominent in the world. (See the map on page 17.) The prospect that Qadhafi will use his more refined sense of Libyan capabilities to exploit growing signs of political instability represents a serious threat to some moderate countries near Libya.

42. Threats, support for terrorism and subversion, offers of military and financial aid, and economic intimidation are the tools of Qadhafi's foreign policy. Qadhafi's choice of tactics at any given time often is impromptu and motivated by opportunism. He almost always mixes his tactics—frequently offering political and economic cooperation to lay the groundwork for renewed subversion. His overtures for closer diplomatic and commercial ties to Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, and

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several West African states—combined with financial and logistic support of dissidents—exemplify Qadhafi's approach.

43. Qadhafi demonstrated his willingness to directly target US personnel and installations in the 1970s—in at least Sudan, Egypt, and Italy—but backed off when he knew the United States had learned of the threats and would retaliate against him. Currently, we believe Qadhafi would directly target US personnel or installations if:

- He believed he could get away with the attack without US retaliation.
- He believed that the United States was engaged in a direct threat to his person or was actively attempting to overthrow his regime.

44. Should Qadhafi decide to initiate terrorism against US personnel and facilities directly, US targets abroad will be more vulnerable than those inside the United States and more accessible to Libyan terrorists. Qadhafi would be hard pressed to mount a successful terrorist operation in the United States. The closure of the Libyan People's Bureau in Washington four years ago has made direct Libyan recruitment of assassins in the United States difficult. Nonetheless, Qadhafi could still recruit foreigners—as he often does—to carry out operations within the United States.

45. There is no indication of threat to American citizens living in Libya. Qadhafi has treated these persons well to avoid alienating US businesses and to put the lie to Washington's warnings about the dangers of dealing with him. A threat to the US personnel in Libya is not likely unless Qadhafi feels a greatly increased threat from the United States.

46. We believe the Libyan leader will continue to pursue his traditional targets: Libyan dissidents and moderate Arab regimes. Qadhafi's determination to kill the leaders of several of these regimes—Egypt's President Mubarak, Sudan's President Nimeiri, Chad's President Habre, Iraq's President Saddam Husayn, and Jordan's King Hussein—will continue to fuel Libyan terrorism for the period of this Estimate. Libya's generally inept direction of such operations and the tight security surrounding these leaders when they travel abroad, however, minimize Tripoli's chances of conducting a successful assassination. Libya has had greater success in assassinating opponents of the Libyan regime, although many have been relatively low-level figures. The embarrassment of the recently foiled attempt to kill former Libyan Prime Minister Bakush in Egypt will keep both anti-Qadhafi exiles and Egypt at the top of Qadhafi's hit list.

47. Libya has the capability to launch a variety of paramilitary and terrorist-style attacks, but its operatives are often inept. Qadhafi often prefers to recruit agents abroad or hire mercenaries rather than use Libyan citizens to conduct operations. Libyan diplomatic missions help oversee operations, distribute cash and weapons, and arrange travel, but the use of surrogates prevails. This trend is likely to continue, as Qadhafi is not eager to have terrorist acts traced directly to Libya, damaging his pretensions of being a responsible Arab statesman.

48. Support for subversive groups is especially appealing to Qadhafi because it usually provides opportunities to train dissidents in Libya and to indoctrinate them in his personal philosophies of revolution. Over the last several years, Tripoli has provided money, weapons, a base of operations, travel assistance, or training to some 30 insurgent, radical, or terrorist groups. Libya operates approximately 10 training camps that provide instruction in politics and the use of explosive devices, hijacking, assassination, and various commando and guerrilla techniques.

49. In the final analysis, those most threatened by Qadhafi remain those most vulnerable to him: first, the Libyan people themselves, then Libyan dissidents abroad and Libya's weaker neighbors. Because he is determined to eliminate Libyan opposition and those who support it, we can expect to see increased targeting of moderate Arab and African interests in coming months.

Targets in the Middle East and North Africa

50. *Sudan.* President Nimeiri's deteriorating political position makes him the Arab leader most vulnerable to Libyan pressure. Moreover, the Sudanese President's support for Egypt and the Camp David accords, his willingness to participate in military exercises with the United States, and his role as a principal backer of Libya's largest dissident organization make him Qadhafi's principal Arab target. Tripoli is one of the leading sources of arms, funds, training, and logistic support to Sudanese dissidents. Such Libyan pressure strengthens the prospect that Nimeiri eventually will cut a deal with Qadhafi to test the Libyan leader's professed willingness to negotiate a reduction in support for each other's dissidents. An effective invasion of Sudan is probably beyond Qadhafi's ability, especially as a sizable number of his limited forces are tied up in Chad.

51. *Tunisia.* While Qadhafi is able to contribute to internal turmoil and instability in Tunisia as well as

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Sudan, he is unable to ensure the outcome of any power contest. Qadhafi will almost certainly exploit political uncertainties when 82-year-old President Bourguiba dies. If Bourguiba dies soon, Qadhafi probably will confine himself initially to throwing his political support behind a contender in an attempt to manipulate the succession process. Libya also probably will step up efforts to expand its clandestine network in Tunisia, and to infiltrate dissident Tunisians currently being trained in Libya. Over time, Bourguiba's demise and the succession struggle will provide Qadhafi with opportunities to fan domestic unrest, especially if the new government fails to ease growing popular discontent. Qadhafi's willingness to send his armed forces into Tunisia will depend on his assessment of the government's prospects as well as the chances of French, US, and Algerian military intervention to stop him.

52. As is the case with Sudan, Qadhafi is likely to employ a two-tiered approach with Tunisia—threats alternating with or accompanied by efforts at co-option—in order to achieve his ends.

53. *Morocco.* Despite the current union of their two states, Qadhafi has long sought the fall of Moroccan King Hassan because he is a moderate pro-US leader. The union provides growing opportunities to increase Libyan influence within Morocco, which Qadhafi will try to exploit when the union ultimately founders and he turns sharply on Hassan. The economic benefits for Morocco have been slow to come so far, and the union may become a factor contributing to domestic difficulties there.

54. *Other Arab States.* Qadhafi also is interested in subverting *Egypt* and *Algeria*, but he realizes that their military superiority limits what he can do. He is interested in toppling the leaders of *Jordan* and *Iraq*, but distance and lack of assets seriously constrain his efforts, barring the persistent threat of assassination by Libyan operatives during their travels abroad. Qadhafi almost certainly will again attempt to embarrass or intimidate Cairo by conducting operations similar to the covert mining of the Red Sea.

Targets in Sub-Saharan Africa

55. The situation in *Chad* risks becoming a complete Libyan victory, and Tripoli shows every indication of occupying the northern part of the country indefinitely. Libyan troops there will continue to pose a serious threat to President Habre, particularly if Paris falters in its resolve to counter any future Libyan military offensive southward. In addition, Qadhafi's

leverage over Chadian dissidents ensures a Libyan role in French efforts to engineer a power-sharing arrangement that reconciles Habre, a northerner, with leaders from southern Chad. Habre's heavyhanded efforts to suppress dissident activity in the south will continue to spur resentment there and create a climate conducive to Libyan meddling.

56. Libya also has prospects for contributing to destabilization elsewhere among black African states. These states—where frequently only a few dollars will buy loyalty, or where a few guns can make a major difference—provide considerable scope for expansion of Libyan influence. But even here Qadhafi has little ability to dictate the outcome of a power struggle.

57. Pro-Western *Niger* is potentially the most vulnerable Libyan target because of military weakness and the fragility of its economic, political, and social structures. Also, the country's remote northern region—which has rich uranium resources—is easily within reach of conventional Libyan military forces. Moreover, two airfields currently under construction in extreme southwestern Libya—one of which straddles the border—probably are intended in part to strengthen Libyan military capabilities against Niger. An extensive Libyan military intervention against Niger would be likely to await a resolution of Libyan efforts to install a pro-Libyan regime in N'Djamena unless instability in Niamey presented Qadhafi with new opportunities. Qadhafi will continue to rely mainly on subversion and sabotage to create a climate suitable to the installation of a pro-Libyan regime in Niamey.

58. *Zaire* has given political and military support to Chadian President Habre, and this, along with its decision to reestablish diplomatic relations with Israel in 1982, has made President Mobutu another one of Qadhafi's principal targets. Tripoli has increased support for Zairian dissidents and has been implicated in several terrorist incidents in Kinshasa over the past year, but the weak and divided opposition organizations have little chance of toppling Mobutu in the near term.

59. Other African regimes with close ties to France and the United States will become more susceptible to Libyan blandishments and will attempt to forestall Libyan meddling by placating Qadhafi if government authority erodes. Qadhafi's dispatching of his Foreign Minister and other envoys to various Francophone African capitals indicates that Tripoli is anxious to exploit African doubts about French security commitments since the French pullout from Chad.

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Targets in Central America and the Caribbean

60. Central American governments and groups are wary of Qadhafi, but not averse to accepting his largess. US involvement in Central America makes operations in the US "backyard" of particular interest to Qadhafi, who seeks to strike back at the United States for building close ties to Libya's neighbors. Libyan involvement in Central America is, however, also motivated by Qadhafi's desire to demonstrate his leadership ability to the Third World.

61. Continued Libyan political, military, and economic support to *Nicaragua* will help prop up the regime and will indirectly enhance the Sandinistas' ability to subvert neighboring states. Qadhafi is also funding leftist opposition political groups in countries such as *Dominica*, *St. Lucia*, and *Costa Rica*. Although Libya probably will try to strengthen revolutionary movements elsewhere in the region and promote more militant activities against the United States, its prospects will continue to be constrained by distance, cultural differences, a longstanding suspicion of Qadhafi by Latin American leaders, rivalry with Cuba, and a bias against terrorist activities on the part of many Caribbean leftists.

Targets in Asia and Oceania

62. The difficulties Libya faces in expanding its influence in this region are similar to those in Latin America. Qadhafi will readily support insurgents in such pro-Western nations as the *Philippines* and the French territory of *New Caledonia* if he calculates that such support will weaken their ties to Washington or Paris. Qadhafi backed a coup plot against *Bangladesh* last year and can be expected to do so again if the opportunity arises. Libya will probably want to provide limited symbolic support to the Tamil rebels in *Sri Lanka*.

Qadhafi's Prospects

Some Recent Successes

63. Despite his overall failure to achieve international acceptability, Qadhafi has in recent months achieved a series of foreign policy successes that have reduced his international isolation and bolstered his confidence. They include:

- Union with Morocco, a US ally.
- Apparently expanding intelligence ties to Greece, designed at least in part to facilitate Qadhafi's efforts to suppress Libyan dissident activity centered in that country.

- Improved military relations with Greece and Turkey, members of NATO.
- A defense treaty with Malta.
- Manipulation of France and continued occupation of northern Chad.
- Enhanced economic dealings and increasing military cooperation with Italy.
- An enhanced diplomatic and military advisory relationship with Central American governments and groups, although Qadhafi has been largely prevented from shipping major arms into the region.

Qadhafi is particularly gratified because several of these breakthroughs involve European countries and can be identified as at US expense. Qadhafi subsequently is feeling confident and successful in his efforts to break out of US political and financial encirclement and he will continue to use economic incentives to improve his ties to Europe. Qadhafi may also in coming months be able to use improving economic relations with Europe to defuse some of the domestic unhappiness with his policies.

64. A major objective of Qadhafi's efforts to improve ties to Europe will be access to Western military equipment and spare parts for embargoed US materials. We are particularly concerned about Libya's apparently expanding intelligence ties to Greece, and about Libya's enhanced military relations with Italy, Greece, and Turkey. The Libyan defense agreement with Malta bears watching, especially if it results in a sustained Libyan naval and air presence.

65. European states that have moved to improve ties to Libya have done so mainly for economic reasons. Continued financial dealings with Libya by American companies have raised serious questions from several quarters about the sincerity of US policy toward Libya. The French—perhaps largely for reasons relating to their own embarrassment over Chad—and the Egyptians have publicly emphasized the economic ambiguity in the US relationship with Libya.

66. Qadhafi today is at least as dangerous as he has ever been and is, in some ways, a more formidable actor on the international stage. His primary long-range goal—to become the preeminent leader of the Arab world—continues to elude him. The passage of time has not diminished his urgency to accomplish his goals, despite his having faced the reality that he will not achieve them quickly. With the years, Qadhafi has become more calculating in blending political skills

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with tactics of terrorism and intimidation as he shrewdly exploits opportunities. Recently Qadhafi has scored some significant successes that lead him to believe he is winning greater international acceptance. Although he will not be satisfied until he achieves his ultimate objectives, these successes have bolstered his self-confidence and spur him on to further—and potentially more dangerous—adventurism.

Negative Prospects

67. Although Qadhafi has managed to attract attention, he has in the process alienated Libya's neighbors and lost most of his credibility in the developing world. In coming months, he may be able further to reduce his economic and even political isolation, but he will not significantly increase his role as an international leader.

68. Arab and African leaders pay lipservice to Qadhafi's position as a brother leader. But they fear his ambitions, do not trust him, and will hesitate to place themselves in positions of dependence upon him. Within the Libyan-Moroccan union, Hassan does not trust Qadhafi, seeks only to use him, and will ultimately face Qadhafi's wrath when Moroccan perfidy is uncovered. With the exception of Chad and Sudan, Arab and African suspicions and vigilance will tend to vitiate Qadhafi's efforts to overthrow or undermine any of Libya's neighbors.

69. Nor will Qadhafi succeed in wiping out the Libyan dissidents. The short-lived reign of terror after an abortive coup attempt in May 1984 was a severe blow to the oppositionist groups. They remain active, however, and show signs of recovery and continuing ability to operate. Of particular importance is growing support for the Libyan exiles by Arab governments.

What Could Blunt Qadhafi's Efforts

70. Essentially, Qadhafi is not controllable. He is independent of real restraint from his close advisers. Nor do ties to moderate states serve to change his behavior. A fundamental belief in the righteousness of his cause prevents compromise, and his recent foreign policy successes encourage him to stay the course. Increased political and economic pressure have not served to permanently modify his behavior. Although he may temporarily back down under threat of strong retaliation, opposition enhances his feelings of self-importance and increases his determination to take revenge.

71. Qadhafi does have a number of limitations and weaknesses that serve to ensure that his desires exceed his reach:

- Lack of appeal. Qadhafi's fanciful economic and political theories do not have much appeal in the developing world. The Third World respects success, and Libya—despite its oil wealth and postrevolution improvements in living standards—has not been able to eliminate shortages of consumer goods, prevent a hemorrhage of intellectuals from the country, keep peace with its neighbors, or achieve international respectability.
- Economic constraints. Qadhafi has been notoriously faithless in carrying through on promises of financial assistance—behavior that has contributed to his loss of credibility in the developing world. Libya's post-1981 economic difficulties have not significantly weakened Qadhafi's ability or inclination to meddle in other states' internal affairs or to engage in terrorist operations. But the need for austerity has caused him to reduce the number of Libyan people's bureaus during this past year, with a consequent reduction in bases from which to spread Libyan influence and subversion. Continued financial difficulties could accelerate this trend and further restrict his ability to purchase allies and finance terrorist operations.
- Increased Arab opposition. The Arabs have sought for years to manage Qadhafi by maintaining contact with him. They have periodically tried cooperation, cajolery, and, in the case of Egypt and Algeria, military pressure. Such tactics have not served to change Qadhafi's behavior over the long term but have on occasion temporarily moderated it. Instead, highly visible acts of internationally unacceptable behavior—many of them directly against Arab interests—appear integral to Qadhafi's agenda.

72. Arab concern has been increased by Qadhafi's failure to withdraw from Chad, his continuing efforts to destabilize Sudan, and his attempts to position himself to take advantage of internal instability in Tunisia when Bourguiba goes. During the past year, several Arab states—including Egypt, Algeria, Sudan, and Iraq—and Yasir Arafat's faction of the PLO have significantly increased aid to the Libyan dissident groups.

73. There are indications that perception of a common Libyan threat is drawing Egypt and Algeria together. Despite ideological and other differences,

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Algeria and Egypt are jointly concerned over the threat Qadhafi poses to regional tranquillity and security. The Libyan-Moroccan union is seen by Algeria as directed specifically against its own interests and security. Cairo and Algiers probably are discussing the possibility of coordinating support for the Libyan oppositionists.

Qadhafi's Opponents: Limited Strength but Growing Support

74. Qadhafi's opponents still pose no major direct threat to his tenure, although they clearly worry him and heighten strains within Libya. Qadhafi's increased preoccupation with Libyan oppositionists has accelerated rather than diminished his aggressive behavior. The opposition groups remain factionalized and largely unable to operate inside Libya. They probably have made some progress in rebuilding the limited capability they had before Qadhafi's crackdown against domestic dissidents last year.

75. There are, moreover, some indications of contact between internal dissidents, including persons in the Libyan military, and external groups. Augmented Arab support for the dissidents will at least marginally strengthen the dissidents' operational ability against Qadhafi, but could also contribute to disunity and rivalry. Improved dissident operational strength could contribute as well to an increasing cycle of attack and counterattack between Libyan exiles and Qadhafi's agents in Europe. In coming months we expect Qadhafi to increase his attacks both on his opponents and on the personnel and installations of those countries that assist and harbor them.

76. But opposition to Qadhafi is the only common denominator among the more than 20 opposition groups—several of which represent only a handful of people—whose philosophies range from Marxist to Islamic fundamentalist to rightwing monarchist. We see no signs that increased internal opposition to Qadhafi has translated into support for Libyan personalities in exile or resulted in increased exile unity. Should Qadhafi depart from the scene, returning exiles—most of them former diplomats, teachers, or other professionals and intellectuals—would be unlikely to persuade the military to relinquish power.

Inept Operatives

77. Qadhafi's efforts to eliminate his opponents are blunted by the general ineptitude of most of his agents and the faultiness of his intelligence. Libyan dissidents assassinated abroad have usually been rank and file,

not the leaders Qadhafi fears most. He has targeted several leaders of other Arab states, but has failed to assassinate any.

Implications for the United States

78. Qadhafi's more innovative use of his traditionally aggressive tactics makes him a more dangerous opponent of US interests and policies. Increased West European opposition to US efforts to impose economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation on Tripoli increases the possibility that Libya will gain greater access to sophisticated Western arms and technology. Growing cooperation between Tripoli and some West European governments, as well as between Libya and Morocco, also may result in some compromise of intelligence supplied by the United States to its NATO and other allies.

79. Qadhafi's success so far in countering US policy toward Libya in Western Europe and, to a lesser extent, in the Arab world will encourage him to take greater risks in his efforts against US interests. He may become more willing to back terrorist operations against US personnel or facilities or to order his armed forces to respond to what he deems "provocative" US military activities near Libya. In any military confrontation with Washington, Qadhafi would cast Libya as a small Arab country victimized by a superpower in an attempt to weaken US influence in the Arab world. Such a posture would meet with very little practical response in Arab capitals, however, except from radical comrades-in-arms.

80. The increasing inclination by Qadhafi to implement operations that cause an international uproar and project an image of Libyan power impacts on the credibility of US economic and security commitments. Qadhafi's actions are likely to prompt persistent requests by US friends in Africa and the Arab world for immediate military and economic assistance to lessen their vulnerability to Libyan pressure. Moderate leaders, particularly Arabs, risk discrediting themselves with repeated and desperate calls for US support. By demonstrating their dependence on the United States, they highlight the failure of their economic and security policies and may promote popular opposition to close US ties. Under such circumstances, continued Libyan pressure, mixed with blandishments, could prompt some pro-US governments—such as Sudan's and Tunisia's—to adopt a more nonaligned posture.

81. Qadhafi's continued disregard for international law and convention—reneging on international agreements, abusing diplomatic privilege for terrorist pur-

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poses, and blatant use of violence against opponents—
undermines international norms of behavior and may,
over time, encourage other states or groups to do
likewise. The international perception of a gap be-

tween US rhetorical criticism of Qadhafi's behavior
and actual US policy toward him also undermines US
credibility on this issue.

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Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

5 August 1985

LIBYA: Qadhafi's Prospects for Survival

Summary

Opposition to Qadhafi continues to grow. Signs of an erosion in Qadhafi's political base of support include renewed plotting by military officers and more widespread grumbling about deteriorating economic conditions. This increased malaise comes at a time when Libyan dissidents are enhancing their capability to conduct operations inside Libya. If the dissidents have supporters in the military willing to assist, we assess their chances of toppling Qadhafi at better than even.

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Qadhafi's response to these developments has been to align himself more closely with hardliners. Qadhafi shows no inclination to rein in the extremists, curtail costly foreign adventures, or backtrack on his unpopular economic socialization programs, all of which could broaden his base of support. A dramatic improvement in living standards also would allow Qadhafi to regroup his political fortunes, but such an option would require an unexpected turn around in the demand for Libyan oil. In the meantime, his refusal to compromise any aspect of his revolution or to make any effort to improve local economic conditions only enhances the prospect of his ouster, either by dissidents, the military, or by fellow tribesmen in a preemptive move to protect their own positions.

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* * * * *

This memorandum was prepared by [redacted] Arab-Israeli Division, Office of Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis. Information as of 31 July 1985 was used in preparation of this paper. Questions and comments should be directed to Chief, Arab-Israeli Division [redacted]

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[redacted]
At the root of domestic discontent is unhappiness with the deteriorating standard of living. [redacted]

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[redacted] most Libyans in Tripoli consider living conditions there worse than ever. [redacted] residents are particularly distressed over continuing shortages of food and consumer goods and repeated breakdowns in public services, including medical care. [redacted]

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These grievances probably are aggravated by Qadhafi's continual exhortations to revolutionary activity, which further undermine the sense of security Libyans are seeking in their daily lives. In July, for example, Qadhafi ordered Western musical instruments in Libya destroyed as part of a new attack on symbols of Western culture. In addition, dissatisfied Libyan university students sent Qadhafi a memorandum in which they linked wasteful expenditures for misguided foreign adventures to the current economic difficulties. Many Libyans apparently are holding Qadhafi personally responsible for excesses committed by his loyalists in enforcing such dictums, [redacted]
[redacted]

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Dissatisfaction with Qadhafi is finding expression in various ways. [redacted] anti-Qadhafi literature recently surfaced again in several Libyan cities and that graffiti has even appeared on walls near Qadhafi's headquarters in Tripoli. Security crackdowns following the Libyan exile attack on Qadhafi's headquarters in May 1984, previously had stifled such activity. These activities are in addition to disturbances among the Berber minority in northwest Libya, at least one assassination attempt against Qadhafi, quashed coup plotting by military officers, the apparent sabotage of a Libyan military installation, and instances of open "counterrevolutionary" decisionmaking by local officials earlier this year. [redacted]

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Growing Support for the Opposition

Antiregime sentiment probably is facilitating attempts by Libyan exile organizations to build a network of support inside Libya. [redacted] there were at least 20 armed dissidents in Libya as of last February. [redacted] evidence of several seaborne infiltrations since then. The total assets of the exiles in Libya are unknown, but we believe, based on the number of boats and infiltrations, that these operations may have put in place between 35 and 100 more commandos. [redacted]

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The exiles apparently have weathered the setback they suffered when Sudan withdrew its support for the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), the largest and most active Libyan opposition group, following President Nimeiri's removal last April. Cairo and Baghdad have replaced Khartoum as broadcast sites for anti-Qadhafi propaganda, although [redacted]

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[redacted] 25X1
[redacted] in the Egyptian case, the NFSL 25X1
has been refused permission to publicly identify its
involvement. Several recent programs from Iraq indicate that
Baghdad has broadened its contacts with Libyan opposition
groups. [redacted] 25X1

A more important development for the dissidents is the
recent increase in Algerian support. [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] Algiers agreed last month to permit the staging of Front 25X1
operations into Libya from Algerian territory. Algiers pledged
last April to provide money, facilities, and training for
paramilitary and intelligence operations as well as assistance in
communicating with plotters inside Libya, [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] at 25X1
approximately 40 Front paracommandos are now in Algeria at a
training facility for the dissidents. [redacted] 25X1

Increasing concern over Qadhafi's aggressive regional
activities is behind expanding Egyptian, Iraqi, and Algerian
involvement with the dissidents. [redacted] 25X1
Cairo is particularly worried about intensive covert Libyan
efforts to create a network for subversion in Sudan. Algeria's
antagonism toward Qadhafi, already strengthened by Tripoli's
union agreement last year with traditional rival Morocco,
probably has been fueled by Libya's efforts to expand its assets
in Tunisia and by continued Libyan funding of Algerian exiles.
Meanwhile, [redacted] Tripoli's provision of 25X1
Scud surface-to-surface missiles to Iran earlier this year and
its announcement last June of a "strategic alliance" with Tehran
have hardened Iraqi resolve to counter Qadhafi. [redacted] 25X1

Despite their opposition to Qadhafi, Egypt, Iraq, and
Algeria have so far been unable to agree on a common program for
unseating him. Nonetheless, progress has been made toward
bilateral cooperation, particularly between Egypt and Algeria,
[redacted] An important obstacle 25X1
was overcome when Algiers decided recently to join Egypt in
backing NFSL leader Muhammad Muqaryaf while maintaining its
support for Abd al-Munim Al-Huni. Algiers reportedly has favored
Al-Huni because it believes he has the leadership skills
necessary to marshal popular support in Libya. Even Egypt and
Algeria, however, have doubts about the other's commitment and
differing assessments of dissident prospects. They probably also
fear Libyan terrorist or military reprisals, in our judgment. [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] 25X1

[redacted] Egypt has turned 25X1
down Iraqi requests that it permit crossborder operations by
Libyan dissidents. We believe that Cairo's reluctance stems from
its belief that collaboration with Algeria rather than Iraq
affords greater opportunities for undermining Qadhafi because of
its closer geographic proximity to Libya. Nevertheless, Egyptian
officials reportedly have told the Iraqis that they may later
want to expand their limited intelligence collection and sharing
agreement on Libya. [redacted] 25X1

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Regime Countermeasures

Qadhafi almost certainly perceives an increasing threat of a coup attempt against him. [REDACTED] the roundups and interrogations of suspected dissidents, including 96 university students last month, has grown. Security forces almost certainly are closely monitoring the activities of military officers, as many as 80 of whom may have been executed last March for their involvement in the first military coup plot in two years. [REDACTED]

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Qadhafi is proceeding with plans to strengthen his already tight personal security cordon. [REDACTED] that Qadhafi's plan to assign some Libyan officers to a new and relatively isolated military headquarters compound in central Libya is intended in part to remove potential plotters from the capital. [REDACTED] Qadhafi is tightening his control over the dispensation of arms to foreign dissidents, probably to prevent their diversion to coup plotters inside Libya. [REDACTED]

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Qadhafi recently demoted several senior intelligence officers for alleged incompetence or insufficient loyalty. He reportedly has replaced them with pro-Qadhafi fanatics. [REDACTED] Qadhafi also plans to create a separate security organization comprising volunteers who will report to the Justice Minister, a Qadhafi confidant. [REDACTED]

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To eliminate antiregime activity overseas, Libyan intelligence agents continue to target suspected Libyan dissidents abroad for assassination. Tripoli continues to try to implement plans to kill a number of dissidents in the United States and West Germany and possibly to bomb kiosks selling anti-Qadhafi literature. Qadhafi reportedly also has ordered a review of the files of all Libyans abroad under government sponsorship. Those whose continued stay is not approved will be ordered home, or presumably will face death. [REDACTED]

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Prospects

Qadhafi in the past has temporarily compromised some of his radical principles to ease discontent, but his increasing reliance on youthful extremists in the revolutionary committees now limits his room to maneuver. Indeed, his recent speeches and actions indicate that he remains personally determined to sustain his revolution and to support foreign radicals. [REDACTED]

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Even Qadhafi's relatives recently expressed renewed concern over the need for change. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Qadhafi's relatives advised him as early as 1983 to curtail his revolutionary programs to safeguard their positions. We believe they might even move against Qadhafi to ensure their survival. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

If Qadhafi continues to reject compromise, he will need at a minimum a hefty boost in oil revenues to reduce the current climate of discontent. We doubt that recent attempts by Qadhafi's supporters to blame shortages of consumer goods on hoarding and mismanagement by local "fat cats" will satisfy many Libyans. Some Libyans may even take to the streets in protest if economic conditions continue to worsen. [REDACTED]

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By replacing seasoned professionals with young zealots, Qadhafi almost certainly has increased the pool of officers willing to plot against him. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] such actions also have sapped the morale of the experienced intelligence officers who remain. Former Armed Forces Chief of Staff Mustafa Kharrubi and Armed Forces Director General Abd Al-Rahman Al-Sayyid probably are particularly tempted to move against Qadhafi. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] both have cause for concern over their declining influence at the expense of the revolutionary committees. Kharrubi, one of three remaining members of the 11-man group that helped Qadhafi to power, was demoted last year for protecting a nephew suspected of dissident activity. Al-Sayyid was temporarily arrested last March for suspected involvement in an apparent sabotage attempt at a military installation near Benghazi. [REDACTED]

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Libyan dissidents are wary of close involvement with any foreign backer, but access to Algerian territory, intelligence information, and training assistance in particular will strengthen significantly their prospects for exploiting discontent. For the moment, the exiles alone probably have the capability to conduct successfully only isolated sabotage operations. Nevertheless, the dissidents probably hope to launch another attack on Qadhafi in the near future to capitalize on his unpopularity as well as on increased foreign support. If the dissidents have well-positioned supporters in the military willing to assist, we assess their chances of toppling Qadhafi at better than even. [REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: LIBYA: Qadhafi's Prospects for Survival

NESA M#85-10159

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DDI/NESA/AI/[] (5 August 85)

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30 September 1985

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: STATUS OF THE LIBYAN OPPOSITION

1. Except for a group comprising family members of deposed King Idris, all of the Libyan exile organizations were founded in the late 1970s and early 1980s (see Annex A).

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Qadhafi's imposition of his revolutionary system of government and increasing reliance on youthful extremists prompted the defections. The leadership of the opposition generally comprises former regime officials, diplomats, and bureaucrats, in their mid to late 40s and early 50s. Most of them operate out of London or Cairo. Their regional backgrounds are heavily Cyrenaican and their political orientations range from extreme left to royalist. Almost all exile leaders allude to state support for Islamic cultural values as essential to Libya's future political identity. At the same time these leaders have shown a greater inclination to bicker among themselves and upstage their rivals rather than develop the capability to seriously challenge Qadhafi.

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the entire exile community totals around 50,000. Available evidence indicates that some groups are little more than a party of one, while others may have membership less than a dozen committed adherents to perhaps several hundred. The rank and file of the oppositionists generally comprises dispossessed middle class professionals, disaffected students, and some former military officers,

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Most live in the United Kingdom, West Germany, France, Italy, Greece, the United States, and various Middle Eastern countries.

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3. No group with the exception of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL) has developed even an embryonic capability for paramilitary action. Most of the exile organizations focus almost entirely on distributing anti-Qadhafi literature. These activities are financed mostly by wealthy expatriate businessmen, although some foreign governments, such as Algeria, Egypt, and Iraq, have contributed during periods of especially strained relations with Libya. The NFSL reportedly operates several profitable commercial companies that help finance its operations.

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4. In addition to the NFSL and other better known groups listed in Annex A, Arab journals indicate anti-Qadhafi students generally belong to the General Union of Libyan Students, established in spring 1976 soon after extremist followers of Qadhafi hanged three students who had participated in antiregime demonstrations. We also have reports about the Islamic Association of Libya, a conservative religious organization created by US-based exiles in 1979 primarily to provide educational and missionary support to Libyans abroad. [REDACTED]

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5. A number of other small groups have formed around specific issues or are offshoots of larger groups. For example, the Libyan Committee to Defend Democracy and Human Rights comprises representatives from the Libyan National Democratic Grouping and the Libyan National Movement. The International Afro-Arab Committee against Qadhafi's Terrorism split off from the NFSL. Small groups of Libyan communists, Islamic fundamentalists, and monarchists exist in the US and elsewhere. None of these groups are particularly active. At most, they distribute anti-Qadhafi pamphlets from time to time or provide commentaries on Libyan political events for local news services. [REDACTED]

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6. Two individuals have achieved particular prominence in the exile community. The late Omar al-Muhayshi, one of the 11-man Free Officers group that helped Qadhafi to power, fled Libya in 1975 following a failed coup attempt. Qadhafi reportedly had him executed last year following his forcible return to Libya by Morocco. [REDACTED]

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7. Abd al-Munim al-Huni, another former Free Officer, continues his opposition activities. His departure from Libya coincided with Al-Muhayshi's failed coup attempt, but his involvement remains unproven. Since leaving Libya, Al-Huni has preferred to operate in a discreet, low-key fashion, although he does maintain good ties with the NFSL. His refusal to participate openly in organized opposition activity reportedly has helped him maintain his contacts among Libyan officials and military officers. In our view, these contacts could provide opportunities for him to play a significant role in a post-Qadhafi government. [REDACTED]

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Rise of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya

8. The NFSL has emerged as Libya's most active exile opposition group since its founding in late 1981. The Front not only has by far the largest number of supporters among the various opposition groups, but it also has the most sophisticated organization and is the only one capable of conducting military action against Qadhafi. NFSL leader Muhammad al-Muqaryaf has developed a wide-ranging anti-Qadhafi program combining dissident radio broadcasts, publications, and demonstrations to exploit Qadhafi's increasing political and economic vulnerabilities and gain international recognition and support. These activities

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also are to lay the groundwork for paramilitary action inside Libya that would result in Qadhafi's removal. Muqaryaf and other Front leaders are generally pro-Western in their political orientation, although some Front members, including Muqaryaf, reportedly have been associated with the Muslim Brotherhood. The NFSL also at one time rejected support from the West to avoid giving the appearance of being a tool of Western interests. In addition, Muqaryaf maintains good relations with Yasser Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization. [REDACTED]

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9. The NFSL's political commentaries condemn Tripoli's human rights abuses, support for international terrorism, and squandering of increasingly scarce economic resources on misguided foreign adventures. The NFSL organized an anti-Qadhafi demonstration in London last year which resulted in the killing of a British policewoman and the wounding of 11 demonstrators by a Libyan firing from the Peoples Bureau there. The Front followed closely the London incident with the infiltration of dissidents into Libya in preparation for an operation presumably intended to topple Qadhafi. [REDACTED] up to 20 NFSL commandos were killed during two highly publicized shootouts with Libyan security forces in Zawarah near the Tunisian border and in Tripoli near Qadhafi's headquarters. Other evidence indicates the NFSL has considered infiltrating supporters into Benghazi to incite a popular uprising there. [REDACTED]

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10. In our view, Muqaryaf's success in building up the NFSL results from his emphasis on removing Qadhafi and ignoring political squabbles among rival dissident leaders. In addition, Muqaryaf has used the publicity surrounding the shootouts in Libya last year to exploit the growing determination of Algeria, Iraq, and Egypt to stop Qadhafi's aggressive regional activities. At the moment, Muqaryaf is receiving arms from Iraq, paramilitary training from Iraq and Algeria, and false passports and other logistic aid from Algeria and Egypt. Even Tunisia, which traditionally has pursued a policy of accommodation with its stronger and more belligerent neighbor, reportedly has agreed to support the NFSL. [REDACTED]

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11. The increased support obtained by the Front from these countries is enabling it to weather the setbacks it suffered when it lost its principal bases in Morocco and Sudan in 1983 and 1984. An essential element in King Hassan's rapprochement and union with Libya was Rabat's withdrawal of support to the dissidents. Hassan reportedly even agreed to turn opposition leaders over to Tripoli. Khartoum ended its assistance following President Nimeiri's removal last April, although increased Libyan interference in Sudanese domestic affairs might prompt renewed Sudanese contacts with the Front. We doubt that Sudanese support for the dissidents would approach the level reached during Nimeiri's rule, however. [REDACTED]

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12. Muqaryaf's absence from Libya seriously constrains his

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ability to build a reliable support network inside the country. Radio programs broadcast from Baghdad and Cairo are the chief means by which the NFSL disseminates its views inside Libya. Cairo is not permitting attribution of the broadcasts to the dissidents, however, [redacted] Muqaryaf claims to have support from leaders of several important Libyan tribes, and there is tenuous evidence the NFSL has established ties to disaffected military personnel. [redacted]

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[redacted] Libyan security forces last year uncovered an NFSL cell in the military and arrested a senior Libyan officer for alleged links to the Front. In addition, [redacted] the NFSL continues to infiltrate small groups of commandos into Libya. In our view, however, the Front alone only has the capability to conduct isolated sabotage operations. If the Front has inside support among the military and tribal groups, however, its chances of removing Qadhafi are better than even. [redacted]

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Next 4 Page(s) In Document Denied